the weekly
Standard
DECEMBER 6, 1999
$3.95

GEORGE W. BUSH, AUTHOR
ANDREW FERGUSON

The God of the Bestseller List

He admires us, He flatters us, He wants us to be rich and have everything we desire. He likes us just the way we are. No wonder we love buying books about Him.

by Alan Jacobs

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the weekly Standard

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the second week in April, the second week in July, the last week in August, and the first week in January) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-303-776-3605 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Ian Slatter 1-202-496-3354. Copyright 1999, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

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Team Bush Storms Capitol Hill

Top aides to Republican presidential front-runner George W. Bush briefed senior House and Senate Republican staffers in a closed meeting Nov. 23 on the status of the campaign. They emphasized that senator John McCain does not pose a threat to the Texas governor in the New Hampshire primary. "The purpose of the meeting was to convince everybody that Bush is going to win the primary," says an attendee, "and to assuage any feeling there might be that McCain is going to sneak up and creep in."

Recent polls have shown the Arizona senator within kicking distance of Bush in New Hampshire. But these Bush campaign aides—political director Maria Cino, deputy campaign director Mark Lampkin, and press aides Ari Fleischer and Mindy Tucker—argued that McCain's Achilles' heel is his acceptance of federal matching funds. Because of this, he is limited to spending roughly $650,000 in New Hampshire, of which he has already spent $250,000. Bush, on the other hand, has refused federal funds and may spend as much as he wants. He also enjoys the support of the state's political establishment, the Bushies stressed.

In response to a question, Cino said it would be up to the House Republican leadership to retain control of that chamber. But the aides did say that after meeting his own fund-raising goal, Bush would raise money for the party and campaign for candidates in close races.

That goal, by the way, is astonishingly ambitious. The team of aides said the Bush "corporation"—their nickname for various campaign, special interest, and grass-roots groups—is expected to amass a staggering $250 million to $300 million for use in the 2000 election. A bit of that will be used for the new television ads unveiled at the meeting. The ads focus on "restoring integrity to the White House," the military, and Bush's record on education and tax cuts while governor. Attendees tell THE SCRAPBOOK this appeared to be only the tip of the iceberg. "It was very clear that they are going to spend a huge percentage on television and mail and getting the message out," said an aide to a Texas congressman.

Team Bush also said that their candidate will be delivering a major economic speech in December. "It's my impression that this stuff is less actual information and more a function of the Bush campaign just doing the dance to make the rank-and-file Republicans think they're responsive to their needs," said another congressional aide. "But it's the smart thing to do. It's just doing what they ought to be doing." ♦

The President and His Marbles

Good news for George W. Bush. Turns out that a loose grasp of certain foreign policy details—not knowing much about the Grecians, to be precise—doesn't disqualify a fellow for the White House, after all.

On a rainy morning tour of the Acropolis Nov. 20, Bill Clinton ("one of our greatest presidents," sayeth Al Gore) blurted out something extraordinary to his guide, Greek culture minister Elisavet Papazoi. Pieces of sculpture and friezework original to the Parthenon—but safely housed since 1816 at the British Museum in London—should be returned to Athens, Clinton told Papazoi. "If it would be me," he volunteered, "I would give them back immediately." The president thus barged unwittingly into a heated, ongoing dispute between the Brits and Greeks over "restitution" of the so-called Elgin Marbles. And did so, incidentally, on the side of a particularly philistine museological ethnocentrism.

As late as the middle 1600s, the Parthenon was still in pretty good shape. On the west pediment, for example, 20 figures by the 5th-century B.C. sculptor Phidias remained intact. By 1800, however, only four were left, and two of them had no heads. The Greeks had used the Parthenon as a munitions dump during their war with the Turks, and the temple had been shelled. And both the Greeks and Turks had later quarried or otherwise defaced the site's marble. So in 1806, the British diplomat and amateur archaeologist Thomas Bruce, earl of Elgin, purchased from the Ottoman governors of Athens, and began shipping back to England, an extensive collection of the Parthenon's surviving masterworks.

The rest of the Acropolis has ever since continued to crumble—victimized by floods of tourists, automobile emissions, encroaching development, and a series of famously bungled 20th-century Greek "restoration" jobs. But for decades now, a succession of Greek governments have been demanding the return of their "stolen patrimony," despite the fact that Athens has neither a legitimate legal claim to the Elgin Marbles nor any feasible plan to preserve and display them.

The Brits have always firmly and correctly said no. They said no again last week in response to Clinton's little Acropolis brainstorm. During parliamentary debate, and in unusually candid interviews with the press, spokesmen for both the Labour government and the Tory opposition essentially told

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the president to keep his yahoo mits off England's antiquities.

And that's only the half of it. The "principle" Clinton was advancing in this incident—he apparently told Papazoi that *all* such antiquities should be similarly removed from *all* the world's museums—is ludicrous. But the principle Clinton's Washington aides advanced in the course of post-Parthenon damage control is even more peculiar: The White House disavowed the president's remarks!

Washington has taken no official, public position on the Elgin Marbles, administration flacks Joe Lockhart and Barry Toiv told reporters; in Athens, Clinton had merely been expressing views he holds "privately." In other words: He may bungle the foreign stuff till the cows come home because *the president doesn't necessarily speak for the United States*.

Now *there's* a handy idea. As THE SCRAPBOOK goes to press, Clinton is beginning a visit to the Balkans for his first post-NATO-rescue speech to the . . . um, Kosovarians. He has just delivered an appallingly presumptuous sermon to them on their obligation to "forgive the Serbs." No doubt that, too, will be brushed aside as his "private" view and therefore meaningless. Governor Bush will want to take note. ♦

Great Moments in Clintonian Diplomacy

From the Nov. 22 edition of the Israeli daily *Ma'ariv*, translated for THE SCRAPBOOK by David Wurmser: In a speech to the Israel Policy Forum on Nov. 20, Israel's prime minister, Ehud Barak, tried to help the Clinton administration extricate itself from the embarrassment caused by Suha (Mrs. Yasser) Arafat's remarks in Hillary Clinton's presence, in which she slandered Israel.

Barak emphasized that "Mrs. Clinton has touched the heart of many in our country," and that "she has encouraged efforts for peace in the region." He went out of his way to dismiss the criticism of Hillary Clinton's failure to quickly and forcefully respond to Suha Arafat's accusations against Israel, saying that Mrs. Clinton "should not be blamed because she could not have reacted immediately on the spot."

Upon hearing the news, New York mayor Rudy Giuliani's camp accused Barak of interfering in the Senate race in his attempt to get Hillary off the hook. *Ma'ariv* reported the following response from Barak's aides: "The criticisms of Giuliani's associates were dismissed by those inside Barak's entourage, who described those statements as mild compared to the pressure exerted on them by senior levels [in the United States] to speak on Hillary's behalf." ♦

Oops

Correction of the week, from *The Guardian* (London): "An article about food in Ireland (Weekend, page 86, November 6) commended a guidebook for showing that 'industrial food production has never penetrated Ireland in the way it has mainland Britain.' This careless inclusion of the word 'mainland' wrongly implies that Ireland is part of Britain." ♦

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Casual

Highway Diplomacy

I have an unfortunate prejudice, one that living in the District of Columbia has only heightened: I dislike drivers with diplomatic license plates.

Like most biases, mine is general, not specific. I have nothing against any particular person displaying the offensive tags—I don't even know one. But when I see a car tooling around Washington outfitted with the red, white, and blue plates the State Department issues to foreign dignitaries, my mind readies unkind words to hurl at the windshield as I wait for the offender to offend me.

Just to be clear, I'm not gripped by a Buchananite antipathy for foreigners. I've never uttered *Ausländer aus* under my breath, and I don't want to close America's borders for fear of a tidal wave of immigration.

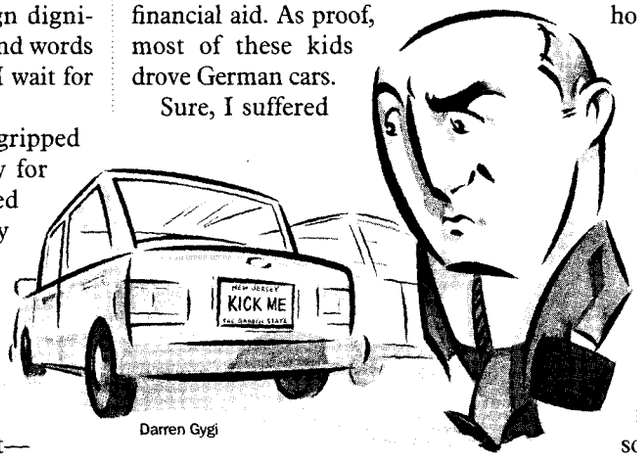
In my limited travels abroad, I've liked most of the foreign people I've met—except a few waiters in Paris. I even got along with the Palestinian student I knew in Ireland who held me responsible for U.S. policy in the Middle East when I was a high-school sophomore.

So why the diplomatic phobia? It seems to consist of a tiny bit of experience, a good deal of extrapolation, and an early habit of discriminating on the basis of license plate.

I came to college in Washington, D.C., and for four years was taught the benefits of multiculturalism. On a predominantly white and middle-class campus, this was supposed to be a mind-opening curriculum. My school trumpeted the many students it welcomed from abroad, the many students it sent abroad, and its numerous courses with an international slant. The phrase "American hegemony" was uttered with a contempt usually reserved for fascist dictators.

In the midst of this American guilt-fest was a clutch of foreign students affiliated with embassies, globe-trotting kids looking to make the most of their time in the United States. The relationship was symbiotic; the students got to enjoy America's higher education system, and the college enrolled students who, I imagine, required little in the way of financial aid. As proof, most of these kids drove German cars.

Sure, I suffered some envy. As I made my way around in my high-mileage, hand-me-down domestic sedan, I tried to be grateful for my own good fortune. But driving past the ever-present row of brilliant new 3-series sedans and coupes, I lamented my plight. As the students, all roughly my own age, stood near their prizes chain-smoking and chattering on their cell phones, I quietly seethed.



Darren Gygi

Beyond petty jealousy, I was annoyed every time I saw one of those cars parked illegally, or one of the owners blasting obnoxious music from the premier sound system and speeding on or off campus. My theory gradually took shape: These kids were the children of elites in their own countries and maybe felt no obligation to follow the rules. Even in the United States, the children of famous, powerful, or wealthy parents often live outside the boundaries other kids face. And ours is a more egalitarian society than many of theirs. Add to this the fact that our laws protect foreign dignitaries from prosecution, and these students had little motivation to respect our rules.

Now, when I see diplomatic tags on a car, I expect the driver to disregard American traffic laws and customs. I suppose the same could be true of just about anyone, especially in downtown Washington. But I was raised to judge drivers by their plates. My parents aren't to blame so much as geography. I spent my formative years around Philadelphia, where to be called a "Jersey driver" is one step short of seeing a middle finger raised in your honor.

New Jersey, land of no left turns, is home to hordes of people who work or shop in Philadelphia and pack Pennsylvania's roads. Invariably, people from New Jersey are jittery, bumbling morons who don't know how to drive, or choose to drive too slowly, or pay no attention to the drivers around them. This creates confusion, congestion, and innumerable near accidents. Or so the theory goes.

While a Pennsylvania driver is allowed an occasional error, a Garden State license plate is as good as a "kick me" sign on I-95. Folks from Delaware don't endure the same level of criticism. I can't explain it, except to say that New Jersey is somehow an affront to Pennsylvania—or at least the southeast corner of it.

So I plead guilty to rolling my eyes when a car with diplomatic plates pulls in front of me. It's a fact that I tend to expect the worst from the foreign driver in the German car ahead. And, true to my multicultural education, I feel bad about it. But given my upbringing, can I change? I doubt it. Sometimes, though, I wish the State Department would just consolidate my prejudices by supplying foreign officials with Jersey plates.

Edmund Walsh

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SCANDAL AT HILLSDALE

Correspondence

I AM COMPELLED TO WRITE to protest the statements made by Hillsdale College's Ron Trowbridge in Tucker Carlson and Andrew Ferguson's recent article on the George Roche scandal ("Sex, Lies, and Conservatism," Nov. 22). Trowbridge's attack on young George Roche IV, whose father has already done the greatest harm to him, is unconscionable.

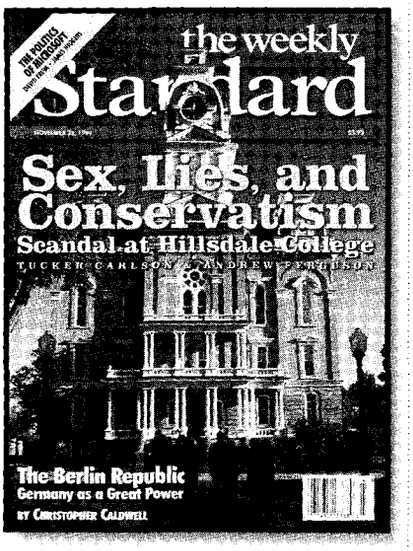
I was at Hillsdale from 1973 to 1975 as an associate professor of political philosophy and assistant to President Roche. I left Hillsdale the day after my son Todd graduated from the college. Unless you've worked at Hillsdale, you cannot fully understand how corrosive it was to be associated with this shameless man, George Roche III. None of us should be surprised by the Roche scandal. What is truly shocking is the cruelty of a father toward his son: To have a long affair with his son's wife is so appalling, it is incomprehensible. No amount of spin can remove the repulsion that a responsible person feels towards this father's sin.

I knew George IV as a teenager—he was quiet, reserved, and handsome. I often commented to his good mother, June, that young George should not attend Hillsdale, but go away to college, to get out of the shadow of his father. But President Roche insisted his son attend Hillsdale College.

There is a wonderful dictum that you learn more about Peter when he speaks about Paul than you do about Paul. This certainly is the case when Trowbridge, vice president of Hillsdale, speaks of young George in such disparaging words, e.g., "He kind of walks around maybe a little not focused." And this from a former English professor? It is time for Donald Mossey, the current chair of the board of trustees, to also resign. Ty Gillespie, the former chairman, would never have put up with this corruption. This board was not ignorant. It just refused to take notice, because George III raised millions with his warm handshake.

There were many good educators who went to Hillsdale College—went there because they thought it was an opportunity to be among those who believed in the founding principles of this country, believed in what our forefathers fought and died trying to attain. But then they got to know George Roche III and left. This is the part of the George Roche scandal that cannot be documented. What would Hillsdale be like today if these people had remained?

Thank you for attempting to tell this most difficult tale. It needs a very good airing in order for Hillsdale to survive.



And most of all, Hillsdale needs an honest, diligent, capable man as its next president.

EMMA BROSSARD
Palm Beach Gardens, FL

HAVING GRADUATED FROM Hillsdale College last May, I can say that the administration's damage-control tactics over the George Roche fiasco are yesterday's news for me, though I had always hoped that Hillsdale's administrators would someday become smarter in dealing with these kinds of matters. William Bennett resigned from the new presidential search committee for reasons that Hillsdale students and recent alumni knew long ago: Hillsdale's administration consistently engages in tactics of cover-up, denial, and censorship to preserve a holier-than-thou image, even when all the dirt is out in the open for everyone to see.

In light of Carlson and Ferguson's article on the scandal, several points should be addressed. For legal purposes, it is understandable for Hillsdale administrators not to discuss Roche's alleged 19-year affair with his daughter-in-law, but I find it repulsively laughable for the college to suggest, in light of George Roche IV's statements, that the former college president may be a "condemned innocent man."

The administration's denial of students' search for the truth of this matter is nothing new; just one year ago, a history professor was fired after allegedly having an extramarital affair with a freshman student (among others). Three years ago, controversy stirred when a forensics teacher was fired after being questioned about her allegedly improper teaching methods. In both instances, Hillsdale students and their respective organizations were not allowed to investigate. Also in 1996, a scathing article about Hillsdale's censorship tactics appeared in the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News*. The two papers were yanked from their respective campus newsstands early on the morning the article was published.

Over time, these examples have shown me that Hillsdale's administrators were so intent on creating a clean-cut public image that they were afraid to admit having faults of their own. This is precisely why, whenever a controversy erupted, it usually wound up getting dragged out for a longer period of time than it should have.

MARIUS PAULIKAS
Downers Grove, IL

IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS events on this campus have turned us (the Hillsdale students and faculty) from our studies and teaching, to issues of rumor and scandal. The president has submitted his resignation, and the board of trustees is looking for a new president.

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SCANDAL AT HILLSDALE

This is really all we have been told.

One thing I have learned from Hillsdale (and Ludwig von Mises) is that all action is human action, and all human action is individual action. What President Roche did—whatever it may be and it may be nothing—does not dictate the values to which this college is beholden. His individual action does not represent, nor will it ever, the actions, beliefs, and character of the professors and students at this college. As long as the professors remain at the college, so will I and many other students. The president is no concern of ours.

You may get much information about Hillsdale in the next few weeks, but the story you will *not* hear, or the one that gets lost amid everything else, is the story about a college where you can learn the truth about economics and the world and not be fed liberal jargon. The donors know this and the students know this. I love this place.

A lot of what we students felt was a concrete and firm foundation has been rocked in the wake of allegations concerning President Roche. If I have learned one thing, it is that the only permanent concrete thing in this life is the next one. I'm resting comfortably in that thought, knowing that the Lord will bring this college, its students, and its professors through the storm. It's not the end of the world, but our tiny bubble of conservatism has been marred and that hurts those of us who are here because of the conservative values of this college.

SHARON WILLIAMS
Hillsdale, MI

YOUR ARTICLE ON Hillsdale College says more about the cannibalistic nature of "conservative" journalism than about my school. I'm a 1982 graduate who happens to live in Hillsdale. In the days surrounding President Roche's resignation, your reporter enjoyed great access on campus, and could have eventually written a piece putting this tragic moment in perspective.

Instead, you rushed to put out a schizoid story: half recent history, half personal observations of—what, exactly? Basically, an administration trying—rather awkwardly—to honestly balance personal privacy, fundamental decency, employment law, and the integrity of this 155-year-old enterprise. This was your "scoop"? This justified a tabloid headline trashing the reputation of the entire institution?

Quite simply, President Roche is gone, but Hillsdale's students, alumni, friends, faculty, and yes, its ideals, are still here. You owed your readers a better story, and now owe the Hillsdale College community an apology.

ERIC LEUTHEUSER
Hillsdale, MI

LAST WEEK, I WAS SICKENED by the scandal surrounding George Roche at Hillsdale College. Today, I was disgusted to read "Sex, Lies, and Conservatism," in which Tucker Carlson and Andrew Ferguson reported on the Roche scandal but then broadened their scope to attack the entire institution.

I currently have three children in school, two who are not at Hillsdale and one who graduated from Hillsdale in 1999 and is now in law school. The Hillsdale graduate was valedictorian of his class, and passed up several other scholarship offers to attend Hillsdale because of its values and the quality of the education provided. Hillsdale delivered on both counts.

Professors at Hillsdale teach a core curriculum that educates the total person. Students learn how to identify truth and how to think—not common commodities in today's politically correct institutions. Attending my son's graduation last May, I was struck by the virtue I observed among the students and professors at Hillsdale. The chorus, the orchestra, the student addresses, the main speaker, even the bagpipes stated that there is "good" left in America and that Hillsdale champions its preservation.

After reading Carlson and Ferguson's article and the delight with which they attacked Hillsdale, I question whether there is "good" left at THE WEEKLY STANDARD. Has the Bill Clinton standard of airing every lurid detail of a scandal become virtuous in their eyes? I submit that their article confused two issues. One is George Roche's conduct. It was reprehensible. Without question, you should report on this issue. The second issue is, "Does Hillsdale College live up to its promises in educating its students and holding to conservative values?" It still does. One man's sin did and will not destroy this institution.

This is a complex issue and certainly a black mark in Hillsdale's history. Before writing a wholesale condemnation of Hillsdale, I suggest journalistic integrity would have dictated investigating whether there is "proof in the pudding." The professors who invested their lives in my son's life have not changed. I am totally satisfied with the education he received, and impressed by the "good" to which his fellow graduates are already devoting their lives.

There is virtue at Hillsdale. It will survive. Since its values correspond to those promoted in THE WEEKLY STANDARD, perhaps you might want to help it do so.

SCOTT HOUSER
Atlanta, GA

I WAS TAKEN ABACK by Tucker Carlson and Andrew Ferguson's article on the Hillsdale events. It read like something the *New Yorker* might publish, and seems to be based entirely on inference and hearsay. The title, "Sex, Lies, and Conservatism," which I suppose was intended to be cute, is really just mean.

Where is the proof of sex or of lies? President Roche has apparently made no comment; his daughter-in-law committed suicide without an explanation. The board of the college stands mute. No matter what Carlson and Ferguson think they know, their article contains no support for these pejoratives. Then there are the gratuitous references to a "'Gestapo police state' and 'Stalinist kind of environment,'" quoting the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, of all things. The article is further evidence (following the drumbeat for war in Kosovo and the love affair with the liberal media's favorite candidate, John McCain) that THE WEEKLY

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Correspondence

STANDARD no longer chooses to speak for conservatism. This, to me, is the real (and sad) meaning of your hatchet job on Hillsdale.

SAMUEL SHEPARD JONES JR.
Chevy Chase, MD

TUCKER CARLSON and Andrew Ferguson missed an important part of the Hillsdale story in their article. More than 10 years before George Roche showed up at Hillsdale, the college was famous for its independence and for refusing government aid. The man who was the architect of that policy was J. Donald Phillips, who served a 20-year term as president preceding Roche. It was Phillips who rescued a nearly bankrupt school and launched it on the present path. He was not able to build up the endowment because there were too many critical needs. But he was responsible for new dorms, a new science building, a new student union, and the Leadership Center. More important, it was Phillips who first articulated the philosophy of independence.

In 1965, when campuses throughout the nation were beginning to experience the upheavals of the '60s, Hillsdale got a taste of the same. Phillips called everyone together and said, "Here is the deal. I run the college and you go to classes. Anybody who does not like that is free to leave." After watching college administrations from Columbia to Berkeley fold before the onslaught of the unwashed, it was a tonic for the nation to see a college president take a stand. As Casey Stengel would say, you can look it up.

In my second year at Hillsdale, I expressed my disappointment to the academic dean about the lack of free-market-oriented professors. He said he didn't know where to find them. My suggestion was for him to call Leonard Read at the Foundation for Economic Education. How about that for a concept? A skinny, pimple-faced sophomore suggests to the academic dean where the college might look for professors. And they don't patronize him—they actually listen. Then they acted, and got a heavyweight in the person of Bob Anderson as professor of economics. He had studied at NYU under von Mises and taught at Grove City and Pepperdine. Now we had someone on campus who really understood the rational basis for free-market ideas. Does this give you an idea of what a great place Hillsdale was long before Roche? This was the atmosphere under the leadership of J. Donald Phillips.

Six years after Professor Anderson started teaching at Hillsdale, George Roche was made president, and it did not take long for his ego to push the memory of J. Donald Phillips out of the picture. It has been painful to watch. Phillips was not a political animal. He did not see things in the context of the struggle between free and command systems. He simply championed a policy he thought made more sense for the college. Roche, on the other hand, understood the struggle, and was able to position Hillsdale so it rode the wave. Now it transpires, as an individual, that George Roche was just surfing the trend, and we feel betrayed. And we are angry.

However, where in the college trustees' handbook does it cover how to deal with these terrible events? Until these allegations are proven, if ever, what is the point of flogging the board? Roche is gone and the search is on for a successor. And perhaps soon, President J. Donald Phillips will be restored to his rightful place in the institutional memory of the college.

EDGAR B. ROESCH JR.
Williamsburg, VA

AS A STUDENT OF HILLSDALE, I would like to offer a few thoughts on the recent scandal plaguing the school. First, I should mention that George Roche IV was my American history teacher last year. To the best of my knowledge, I would say Roche IV, as THE WEEKLY STANDARD rightly declares, is not crazy or deluded. If he is taking any pills for depression, it is undoubtedly because he has suffered immensely. Personally, this scandal hits close to home.

On the other hand, I think THE WEEKLY STANDARD has missed a few rays of light coming through the clouds in reporting on Hillsdale's troubles. I would say that it is beyond reasonable doubt that George Roche III had an affair with Lissa Roche, whatever he says. Notice, however, some of the contrasts one can find between this scandal and the scandal of Bill Clinton, the liar serving as our nation's president.

Yes, Roche III did deny his affair, as Clinton denied his own. Notice, however, that Roche III also quit while he was ahead. His lies were feeble enough that one could see they were merely his way of saving face. Clinton's lies were equally feeble, but he and his staff ruthlessly defended them, wasting dollars and stubbornly refusing to resign. Thanks to Roche III's wise decision, our college can move on, and will only suffer a minor setback. Clinton's refusal to leave office, however, has been harming our nation's credibility ever since.

Notice that we have set ourselves apart from the leftists in several other respects. (I prefer the term "leftists" to "liberals." "Liberal" means open to new ideas. Leftists are almost always opposed to new ideas these days.) For all of its self-proclaimed weariness with the Clinton scandal, the leftist press continued to delve into every minute detail of it, which is why we all know about Clinton's alternative use for cigars. We, on the other hand, feel free to let Roche III leave office quietly without discussing the sordid details of the affair. As you mentioned, there was very little judgment passed on him. Isn't this a good thing? I would point out that leftists often attack religious opponents for being "judgmental," even as the same leftists pass judgment on others. The punishment was fitted to the crime: Roche III was sent home to live with himself.

In short, Hillsdale is proving that the Right handles scandals much better than the Left does. The only thing that remains is for the Hillsdale staff to give up any remaining pretense and get on with running the school. This latest setback notwithstanding, life will go on. Hillsdale is still a great school, warts and all, and I'm still glad to be part of it.

LOREN MEYER
Hillsdale, MI

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the weekly Standard

Trading Places

Once upon a time, not so long ago, Communist regimes dotted the globe and Americans knew what we thought of them. We disliked them. Because we saw ourselves as the heart and mind and muscle of liberty, we felt obliged, as a matter of principle, to resist the advance of these dictatorships—and to remember and speak for their already conquered victims. For 40-plus years following World War II, anti-communism was a central means by which America defined its place in the community of nations.

Not anymore. These past 10 years, with the Berlin Wall a ruin, the United States has understandably relaxed its assumptions about the scale and immediacy of communism's threat. And at the same time, through its eager approach to the world's last remaining dictatorial monolith, the United States has performed a still more momentous—and, this one, dishonorable—reversal. For in the course of a famously intensive "engagement" with mainland China, our country has effectively all but abandoned its traditional objections to the very *nature* of communism. We no longer seek to contain this form of tyranny. We no longer even bother to be appalled by it.

It is all very nifty, the Clinton administration's "sophisticated" case for engagement. Nifty and vulgar and lazy and false.

This semi-conscious slide to appeasement was on full display with the announcement two weeks ago of a bilateral agreement for Chinese accession to the World Trade Organization.

The WTO deal was unveiled with predictable fanfare by the Clinton administration. National Economic Council director Gene Sperling, on the ground in Beijing, gushed about how the entire "future of the global economy" would be improved by the success of his negotiations. The president himself, at a press conference in Ankara, Turkey, was even more expansive, almost a walking parody of engagement dogma—by which the Earth is a financial market, not a collection of political actors, and what is good for that market automatically serves God's overarching design. The WTO pact, Clinton proclaimed, would advance the cause of everything "from nonproliferation to regional security to environmental protection to human rights." Whiter whites, bluer blues.

Now, we're not quite sure how completely these people believe their own propaganda about the virtues of the deal qua deal. The Chinese may indeed turn out to be the world economy's "next big thing," as the Wall Street engagement priesthood desperately hopes. But it may *not* happen, and the reasons why are hardly a secret. China's growth rate has slowed. It has 15 to 20 million urban unemployed. Its four state-owned banks are essentially insolvent, with $120 billion in uncleared debt (representing a staggering 12 percent of GDP). And Beijing is struggling to manage a deflationary spiral, and may soon devalue the yuan—which would erase any short-term American trade-balance benefit from WTO-mandated tariff reductions. Even long-term, in a purely economic context, the new deal will "work" only if multilateral enforcement mechanisms make it work. "Success," in other words, remains highly speculative.

And, truth be told, in the grand scheme of things, we don't much care whether the speculation bears fruit. We are rather more concerned about the noneconomic claims made on behalf of China's WTO accession, in particular, and Sino-U.S. engagement in general. You hear it again and again, these days: that since 1989 the Chinese people have struck an implicit bargain with their rulers; that they have accepted another generation of enslavement to the Communist party in return for an opportunity to get rich and acquire modern consumer goods; that what they really want America to do now is sell them stuff, nothing more. The stuff itself will bring a happy bonus, we are further instructed. National security adviser Sandy Berger, for example, suggests that the new trade made possible by the administration's WTO breakthrough will "make China, I believe, a more open, and, hopefully, more pluralistic, ultimately, place."

It is all very nifty, this "sophisticated" case for engagement. Nifty and vulgar and lazy and false.

We do not recall a papier-mâché figure of Alan Greenspan guiding the Tiananmen Square protesters in 1989; it was the Statue of Liberty. We do not recall those protesters *choosing* a future of cash-and-communism; we remember them getting run over by tanks. And we do not recall a single day since when American businessmen and

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their political frontmen in Washington have succeeded, through the miracle of marketing, in making China a "more open, and, hopefully, more pluralistic, ultimately, place."

Gene Sperling and U.S. trade representative Charlene Barshefsky arrived in Beijing for the final week of WTO negotiations on November 8. On November 9, China sentenced four founders of the now-crushed China Democracy party to prison sentences—for "subversion"—of 5 to 11 years. On November 10, Chen Jianguo was arrested in Shandong province, also on a charge of subversion, for the crime of founding a second independent opposition group, the China National Freedom party. On November 12, the day the WTO deal was finalized, China sent four more members of the Falun Gong meditation movement to the gulag, merely for requesting that their previously incarcerated compatriots be released.

This is what Communists do. Simply shipping them cell phones and soybeans will not make them stop. It never has. And it never will. "We have to be realistic," the exhausted Barshefsky let slip to the *New York Times* on her way back to Washington. It is only a "market-opening agreement" that she has concluded with China. There remain "elements of the country"—the unsavory ones, presumably—that "will never change."

What, then, about our country, the United States? That would seem to us the most relevant question. For years now, congressional consideration of China's "most favored nation" (MFN) trading status has been the principal formal mechanism by which our complacent government so much as debates the proper American posture toward Beijing's brutal dictatorship. If China is now accepted into the WTO, even this faint echo of America's once proud adherence to democratic anti-communism will fade to nothing. The WTO treaty will require us to make MFN a permanent, unreviewable gift to China, and we will thus go still more shamefully silent about the nature of that regime.

As Barshefsky says, the WTO deal by itself will not change China. It will change the United States, however. Not for the better.

—David Tell, for the Editors

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Anatomy of a Pseudo Smear

McCain supporters point fingers. Bush backers say, Who, me? BY FRED BARNES

SENATOR CHUCK HAGEL of Nebraska says he first got wind of the whisper campaign against John McCain while listening to columnist George Will on ABC's *This Week* on November 7. Will cited Republican senators as remarking on McCain's "personal pique" when opposed. It goes, said Will, "to the question about whether or not you are going to deal with all the people in [Washington] who disagree with you, even when you are president." Then, Hagel says he heard rumors that a few senators were privately suggesting McCain, the Arizona senator, was traumatized as a POW in North Vietnam and now is too unstable to be president. Hagel concluded McCain was being viciously smeared.

A McCain pal and supporter, Hagel went on the warpath. He confronted senator Paul Coverdell of Georgia, the point man in the Senate for George W. Bush's presidential campaign. Hagel also asked to meet with Karl Rove, Bush's chief strategist. Through Coverdell, Bush denied spreading any stories about McCain's fitness. Rove declined to meet with Hagel, but he, too, denied the Bush campaign was smearing McCain. Later, a number of pro-Bush senators insisted they hadn't intimated that McCain is unstable.

All that, however, didn't end what has become one of the oddest episodes in the GOP presidential struggle, and one that may wind up aiding McCain's White House bid. If nothing else, McCain is a sympathetic victim. He was a hero in Vietnam, who refused early release by his Hanoi jailers. So using McCain's Vietnam experience against him would indeed be a smear. But there's reason to believe the smear never occurred.

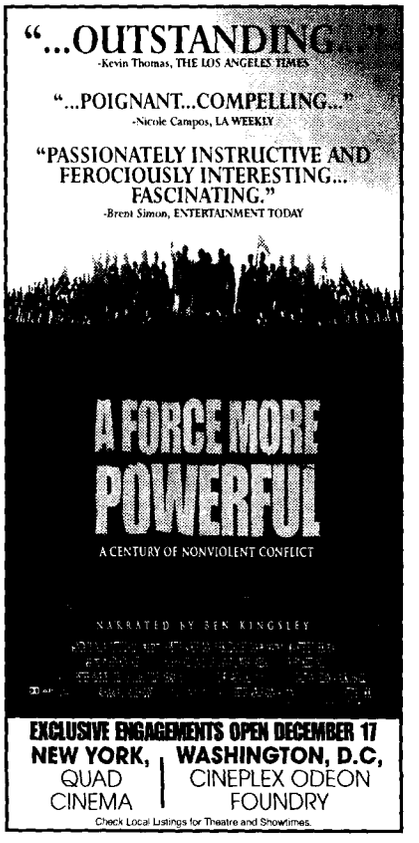
The smear story broke in the press on November 19 with a column by Elizabeth Drew in the *Washington Post*, followed two days later by one in the *New York Times* by Maureen Dowd. Drew named four Republican senators as participants in "a smear campaign of the ugliest sort." Dowd wrote about "whispered insinuations" by Republicans, including Bush backers, that McCain had been driven "cuckoo" in Vietnamese dungeons. And Dowd quoted Hagel as saying the anti-McCain talk is "an orchestrated effort, very subtle, very clever." What started as complaints about McCain's temper, Hagel said, turned into discussions of his temperament, then to suggestions of "instability."

There's a problem, however, with the notion of a smear campaign against McCain: No actual instances of smears have been reported, no examples of Sen. X talking to reporter Y about McCain and Vietnam. Neither Drew nor Dowd cited any, though Drew said on CNN she had the "most multiple and hardest confirmations" of smears. *Roll Call*, the Capitol Hill newspaper, searched for instances and couldn't find any. McCain himself said on *Face the Nation* on November 21 that he didn't know of any. Howard Opinsky, McCain's campaign press secretary, told me, "I don't have any evidence one way or the other, and we're not saying any exists." Even Hagel described the smears as "phantoms."

But Hagel did say he heard that two "money men" from New York had asked two senators if they should back the McCain campaign and were told they shouldn't because McCain is unstable. But Hagel doesn't know the names of the senators. And every senator whose name has come up in connection with the alleged smear has reacted indignantly. Hagel says he talked to Senate GOP whip Don Nickles, who was named by Drew as a smearer, and believes his denial. Majority leader Trent Lott, also named by Drew, told reporters on November 19: "I don't know what is wrong with Elizabeth Drew. . . . There is not one iota of truth to it. There is no whisper campaign." Coverdell, in a letter to the *Post*, said the "accusations are reckless, without merit, and quite simply, poppycock." Nickles, in a separate letter to the *Post*, called the charge he'd smeared McCain "absolutely false. . . . I have the greatest respect for him and I would not undermine him or his campaign in any way whatsoever."

Perhaps these denials should be taken with a grain of salt. Drew wrote

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.



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that denials should be expected. "Nobody is going to stand up in front of the world," says Hagel, and assert that McCain is unfit to be president because of what happened in Vietnam. But denials aren't proof that what's being denied is true either. It is clear that a number of McCain's Senate colleagues don't say nice things about him. McCain has bucked the leadership on campaign finance reform and anti-tobacco legislation, and he prides himself on being a maverick. Lott and senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, an influential Republican, "have a problem with McCain," Hagel says.

So do other Republicans. The flap over McCain's temper began with an October 25 story by Richard Berke of the *New York Times* in which Arizona governor Jane Hull told of McCain's "occasional eruptions at her." The story also quoted Michigan governor John Engler questioning whether McCain is a team player. The McCain campaign—and McCain himself—took this as a shot across the bow from the Bush campaign. McCain suggested a memo must have gone out from Bush headquarters with orders to attack McCain's temper. The Bush camp scoffed at this. A week later, McCain's hometown paper in Phoenix, the *Arizona Republic*, said in an editorial that there's "reason to seriously question whether McCain has the temperament, and the political approach and skills, we want in the next president of the United States."

It's possible that gripes about McCain's temper were interpreted as tacitly alluding to the after-effects of his hideous treatment as a POW. George Will, for instance, didn't mention Vietnam. I suspect we'll never know for sure whether McCain was smeared. But lack of certainty didn't stop *Newsweek* from giving Lott a down arrow for trashing McCain. And presidential hopefuls Gary Bauer and senator Orrin Hatch quickly blamed the Bush campaign for smearing McCain. Mike Murphy, McCain's strategist, says the McCain campaign won the flap over his temper and Vietnam. Of that, there's no doubt. ♦

Free at Last in Kansas City

Twenty-two years of judicial control failed to improve the schools. BY JACK CASHILL

On November 17, federal district judge Dean Whipple dismissed the Kansas City school desegregation lawsuit that had placed the city's schools under the control of federal judges for two decades. Not since boxer Roberto Duran held up his gloved hands and whimpered "*No más*" had the world seen such an abject surrender. "The [district] is not in any way segregating its students or otherwise discriminating on the basis of race," Whipple ruled. "It has not done so for years."

So ended the most costly and ambitious desegregation project in American history, one that has left Kansas City schools less competitive and more segregated than they were when the federal judiciary took them over 22 years ago. For the first 20 of those years, the case was managed by judge Russell Gentry Clark. How this sober, God-fearing gentleman and yellow dog Democrat came to sacrifice common sense and the rule of law in a case that Missouri senator John Ashcroft once called a "testament to tyranny" deserves retelling.

Judge Clark, as fate would have it, graduated from the segregated law school at University of Missouri in Columbia in 1952, the year *Brown* v. *Board of Education* first reached the Supreme Court. The landmark case wouldn't be decided until 1954. Legendary justice Felix Frankfurter, sensing it had little chance before a Court more interested in constitutional tradition than in good causes, maneuvered for its postponement. Within a year, however, chief justice Fred Vinson died and was replaced by the Republican governor of California, Earl Warren, who knew a winning issue when he saw one.

Brown, which ruled "separate but equal" schools for blacks and whites unconstitutional, was hailed as a great moral victory, but its effect on schools in states like Missouri, which had mandated segregation, would be slow and ambiguous. *Brown*'s effect on judges and their ambitions was more immediate. They liked praise and responded to it.

Activists came to see that their causes could be advanced more surely in a sympathetic court than in the democratic hurly-burly of a hostile legislature. Inexorably, dramatically even, the political culture shifted. The weightiest issues—race, criminal justice, abortion—were increasingly the province of courts, and not elected officials.

Meanwhile, Russell Clark was back in Missouri living the simple life. As Arthur Benson, the plaintiff's attorney in the Kansas City desegregation case, tells it, Clark was "up at 5 A.M. to feed the cows, in his law office by 6:30, home at 4:00 for nine quick holes of golf and in bed by 8:00."

For 25 years, Clark worked hard and well for a small Springfield firm specializing in defense litigation. Then Democrat Jimmy Carter was elected president. Clark had worked in various campaigns on behalf of his good friend and fellow Democrat, senator Tom Eagleton. After Carter's election, Eagleton secured for Clark the first judgeship to come open in the Western District Federal Court. Like his home state hero Harry Truman, Judge Clark was well into his

Jack Cashill is a writer and TV producer in Kansas City, Missouri.

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50s before he made his own reluctant debut in "the bigs."

The timing was crucial. Democrats controlled the presidency and both houses. Party activists, almost to a person, had come to support a loosely defined "living Constitution." And well they might have. By the 1970s, almost every controversial liberal issue—from the effort to abolish the death penalty to the abolition of school prayer, from due process rights for criminals to the free expression rights of pornographers—would likely have been rejected by Congress and most state legislatures. Yet all these causes had received a friendly hearing from the courts.

Significantly for Kansas City, the Supreme Court had made its fateful shift from prohibiting racial segregation in the schools to insisting on "racial balance." In 1971, the Court gave its blessing to forced busing as a remedy for persistent segregation. And by 1977, when Russell Clark became a federal judge, the momentum of the courts was so strong, and its direction so defined, that few in either party cared—or dared—to get in its way.

Clark had been on the court a few months when the Kansas City school desegregation case—*Jenkins* v. *Missouri*—was, he said, "dropped on his plate." He did not seek it out. But he did not shy away from it either. He brought to the task an activist's faith in the moral power of the courts and a residual guilt over the nation's racial history. Even Clark's critics acknowledge that the case looked ripe for intervention.

Missouri had responded to *Brown* by "permitting" local districts to integrate. The Kansas City school district had taken the hint, and its own sweet time, redrawing boundaries throughout the 1950s and '60s partly to keep black students in black schools. By 1969, black students had become a majority in the district, but the voting majority remained white. And voters rejected one initiative after another to fix the schools. Buildings were crumbling, test scores were dropping, and white kids were leaving.

Clark proved to be an unapologetic improviser in the take-charge FDR/Truman mold. Says he matter-of-factly of the era's judicial power grab, "We did not do anything that Congress should not have done." Clark's innovation, one put forward by the plaintiffs' "educational and desegregation experts," was not to bus kids by force in from the suburbs but to attract them by making the city schools more alluring.

In theory at least, this remedy seemed less divisive than forced busing. Two minor technicalities: New magnet schools would have to be created in Kansas City that truly were attractive. And to build the schools, the state and the district would have to bust their bank accounts and foot a huge bill—$2 billion, in the end.

After eight uneventful years on the case, Clark decided in 1985 that Kansas City citizens were clearly not up to the task of funding good enough schools. So he made the boldest move of his or any judge's career: He unilaterally doubled taxes on Kansas City property owners and raised the payroll taxes on its workforce. He also levied a huge assessment against the state of Missouri and launched the biggest one-man building project since Ramses II raised his pyramid: 17 new schools and the rehabilitation of 55 old ones.

It was an astonishing decision, clearly the toughest of Clark's career. But hey, if Harry Truman could drop the A-bomb without hesitation or regret, Judge Russell Clark wasn't going to brood over a school tax. "Never lost a wink of sleep over the case," he now says dispassionately.

Perhaps without fully realizing it, Clark had crossed a constitutional Rubicon. In the Federalist Papers, Alexander Hamilton had defended judicial independence precisely because judges would not control the

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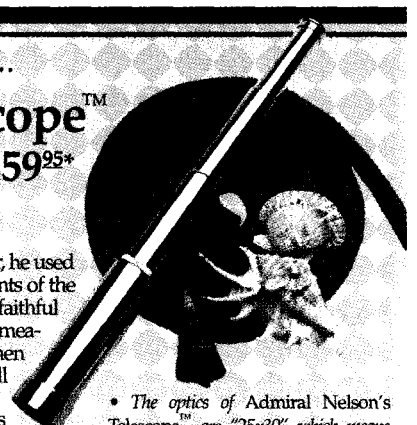

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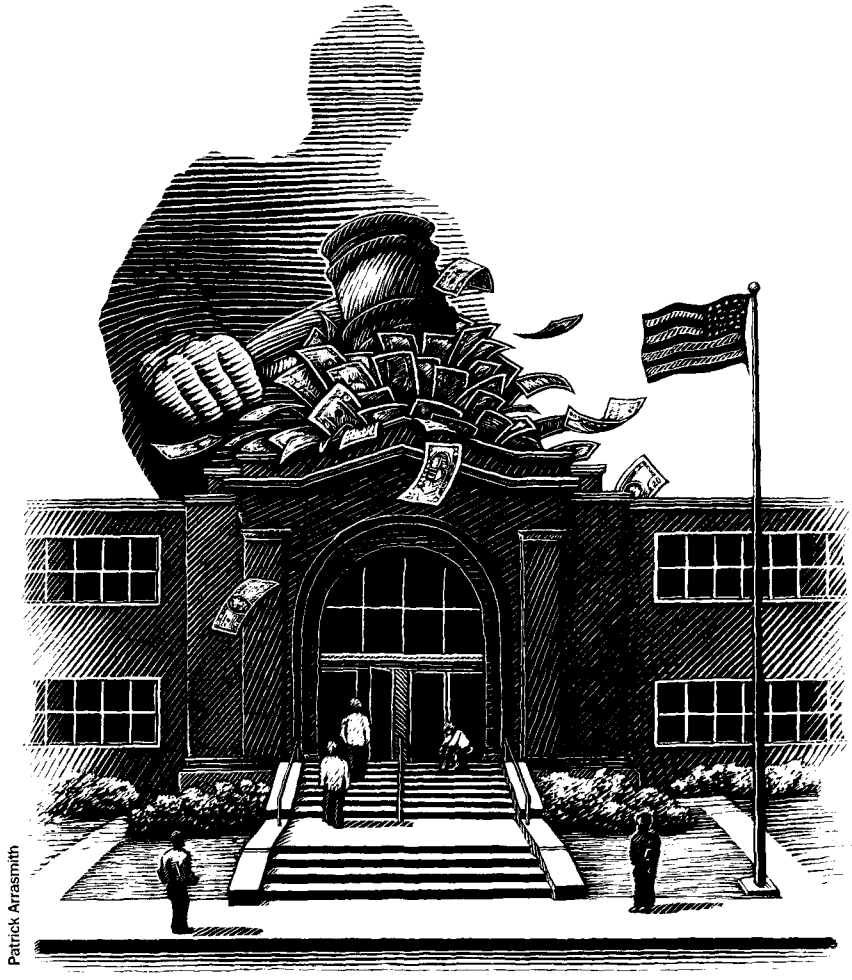
Patrick Arrasmith

purse. Hamilton and his fellow Founders had gone to war over a comparable affront by the British. "No taxation without representation," they protested, a rallying cry that echoed down the centuries until it fell on deaf ears in a Kansas City courthouse.

Missourians who cared about their history—and about their taxes—were outraged by Clark's decision. Their outrage did them little immediate good. Unlike Truman, whose urge to act could be checked—as it often was—by the two other branches of government, Clark was accountable only to his fellow judges, and they continued to support him, for a time. In 1990, the Supreme Court voted to uphold most of Clark's tax decision, but the margin was only 5-4, and the opposition was growing stronger. Clark, despite protest, would not relent. Indeed, he insisted that the courts would oversee the schools until the city's students reached the national norm on academic achievement, even if it took a generation.

Still and all, and despite legendary spending levels ("a gold-plated Taj Mahal . . . planetariums, pools and pay increases," in Sen. Ashcroft's words), the magnet schools never really worked. "I always think Judge Clark tried to do the right things," says former Kansas City School Board president Ed Newsome, "but he was always given pretty bad plans with which to operate."

Many things ailed urban schools like Kansas City's, but it turned out those ills were not cured by the presence of white students or a lavish physical plant. The judicial momentum for court-supervised integration as the answer to bad schools stalled, and in June 1995 the Supreme Court rapped Clark's knuckles. Chief justice William Rehnquist, writing now for the majority, admonished Clark to forget about test scores and "restore state and local authorities to the control of the school system."

By early 1997, Clark dreaded the daily drive to Kansas City and the interminable hearings. He chafed at the restraints the Supreme Court had imposed, and now doubted whether he could solve the district's problems even without them. Too many fatherless children, he had begun to feel; too little motivation at home. "I don't know," he mused, "if the disparity [between Kansas City's black and white students] can ever be eliminated. Probably not."

And so, after 20 years on this notorious case, Russell Clark handed his supervisory duties over to Dean Whipple. As it happens, Whipple, thanks to consent decrees in other federal lawsuits, was already running the Kansas City Housing Authority, Jackson County jails, and Jackson County foster care. Probably no American since general Douglas MacArthur in occupied Japan had exercised such unlimited suzerainty over so many people as Judge Whipple did in Kansas City. More troubling still, the locals had lost the will to protest.

But Whipple, a Reagan appointee, has now begun to shed those responsibilities. In his landmark dismissal last week, he lamented that Kansas City's schools suffered from "too many chefs in the kitchen." His role and that of his appointed Desegregation Monitoring Committee, he feared, only compounded the problems of school management. The school district this fall had failed to meet any of the state's 11 performance standards. The guidance of a federal judge was not about to change that, and he knew it. "Despite the expenditure of vast sums . . . and the passage of 40 years since the end of official, de jure, segregation," Whipple wrote, the district "still struggles to provide an adequate education to its pupils."

No más.

Although the 22 years of federal control proved something of a failure, they were not a tragedy. Far more damaging to democracy would have been the experiment's apparent success. Now, suddenly responsible for their schools for the first time in a generation, the people of Kansas City have a chance to do better. ♦

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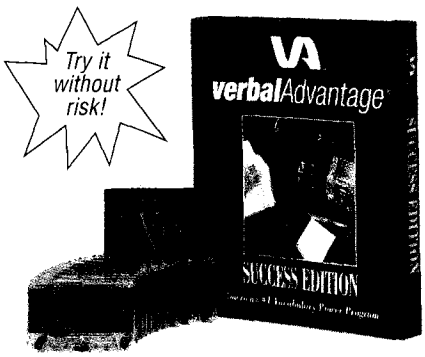

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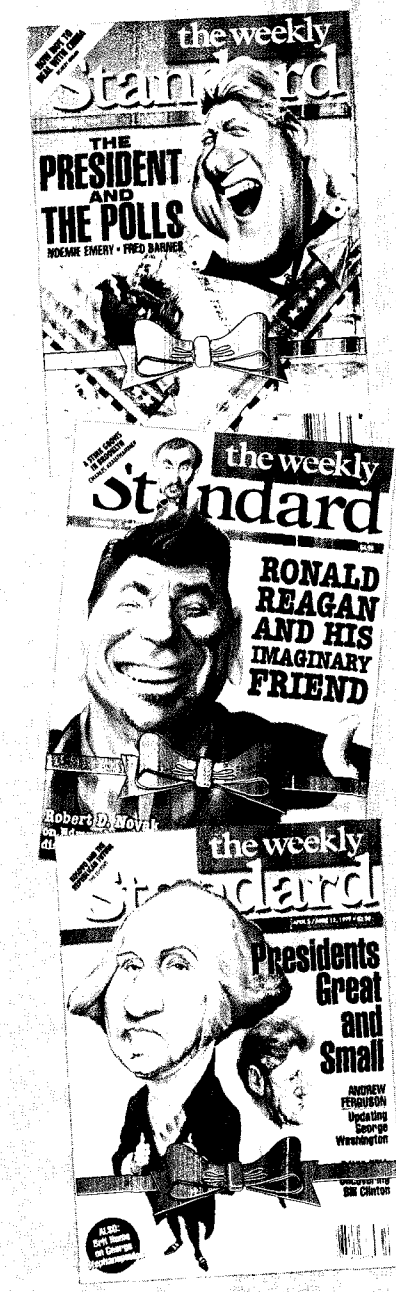

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Family Values Go Global

Pro-family advocates gather in Geneva to plot the good fight. BY DON FEDER

Patrick Arrasmith

Geneva

Mormons and Catholics huddled. Orthodox rabbis and Moslem imams compared notes. Nicaragua's minister of the family listened attentively as a physician from Kenya described the impact of birth control on a tribal culture. A law professor from Tokyo University deconstructed the concept of children's rights. Jehan Sadat, widow of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, and Alfonso Cardinal Trujillo, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, received standing ovations.

Welcome to the World Congress of Families II, convened in Geneva, Switzerland, November 14-17; its ongoing mission, to defend and promote "the stability, autonomy and fecundity of the natural family."

The World Congress of Families was spearheaded by two individuals: Allan Carlson, president of the Howard Center, a pro-family think tank in Rockford, Illinois, and Richard Wilkins, a law professor who runs a nongovernmental organization (NGO) called the World Family Policy Center at Brigham Young University. Carlson, a social historian, began to network with family activists outside the United States in 1995. Wilkins was mobilized the following year at the U.N.'s Habitat Conference in Istanbul. What shocked him into action was a resolution describing marriage as the subjugation of women, and another seeking to legalize same-sex unions worldwide. The professor confesses, "I became a little concerned."

Carlson convened the first World Congress of Families in Prague in 1997. Wilkins made the second a joint effort, combining the resources of Brigham Young and his own convert's zeal with the Howard Center's scholarship and the international network Carlson had cultivated.

The United Nations was very much on the minds of the 1,500-plus delegates to the second conference, drawn from as many as 60 countries. The mission statement for the conference warns of the relentless advance of ideologies that "deny the natural origin and status of the family, . . . the miracle of fertility and procreation, the dignity and worth of every human person and the autonomy of the family itself."

At the U.N., those ideologies are ascendant. From the positive pronouncements of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (which celebrated the family as "the natural and fundamental group unit of society" and, as such, "entitled to protection by society and the State"), the U.N. has slipped into the iron grip of agenda-driven bureaucrats and their feminist allies in increasingly influential NGOs.

In an upcoming policy report, Patrick Fagan of the Heritage Foundation details how, both subtly and overtly, U.N. conventions, conferences, commissions, and agencies push a population-control, abortion-rights, children's liberation, gender-bending program. Thus, the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Children (as yet unratified by the United States) promulgates a child's hypothetical right to "freedom of expression and association" as well as the absolute freedom to "receive and impart information." Presumably, this would give your 15-year-old daughter the right to hang with bikers (association), pierce various body parts (expression), and receive

Don Feder is a Boston Herald *writer and syndicated columnist who addressed the World Congress of Families II on media bias.*

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instruction in sexual techniques and referrals to abortion clinics (information).

Earlier this year, the U.N.'s Hague Youth Forum proposed that children as young as 10 receive "comprehensive training in sexual expression, sexual pleasure and sexual orientation." Parental interference would be classified as child abuse. Proposals under consideration by the International Criminal Court define the denial of abortion, in those nations where the procedure is still illegal, as "forced pregnancy," a crime against humanity.

The committee in charge of monitoring compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women has ordered China to legalize prostitution and Kyrgyzstan to legalize lesbianism.

Through its population fund, the world body has expended billions of dollars on population control or, in the words of Francisco Tatad, a Filipino senator who addressed the congress, "trying to cure childbearing among married women."

In contrast to the aversion reaction surrounding the recent arrival of the Earth's six-billionth inhabitant, delegates (pro-natalists all) focused on what they see as a coming depopulation crisis. Nicholas Eberstadt of the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies observed that "population growth looks to be in unmistakable decline." It has in fact fallen from the 2.2 percent annual growth of the 1960s to an estimated 1.2 percent in 2000. The total fertility rate (the number of children the average woman will bear in her lifetime) has plunged from 5 in 1950 to 2.7 today, a decline of over three-fifths. The entire industrialized world (79 countries with 44 percent of the Earth's population) now has a below-replacement fertility level.

Activists and scholars at the conference see a plague of childlessness producing a graying population in the developed world, where today 1 in 10 is over 60 years of age and by the middle of the next century the figure will balloon to 1 in 5. Says Tatad: "In the West, a severe demographic winter has turned once vigorous societies into a murderous desert from which all celebration of conjugal love and human life has been banished forever." After decades of war on motherhood and large families, "The deserts of the West are likely to remain barren forever." In consequence, "They will have to look to foreign migration, as is happening now, just to keep their factories and social services running. Asians and Africans who manage to learn the language well will become tomorrow's Europeans." Sessions also considered the impact of divorce, contraception, abortion, child abuse, bioethical challenges, the corrupting influence of the entertainment media, and sex education.

Margaret Ogola of Kenya, a physician who runs a hospice for HIV-positive orphans, received the longest sus-

Michael Ramirez

STUNG BY FORMER PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL PLAYERS' ENDORSEMENT OF BILL BRADLEY, AL GORE PURSUES AN ENDORSEMENT FROM HIS PEERS.

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tained applause. In a brief and moving address, Ogola surveyed the devastation of the sexual revolution. "Thanks to contraceptives and their worldwide marketing—most people could get away with infidelity and premarital sex—but deception of course quietly destroys relationships." Sex is no longer seen as a wonderful and sacred gift; nor the power to beget children as anything very special. This is reinforced by sex education "based entirely on how pregnancy and disease could be avoided. No morals or responsibility to anyone is mentioned—except mutual momentary consent."

In light of the foregoing, delegates agreed that a coalition must unite people of different faiths (all were represented at the conference) to fight for their common values.

A worldwide survey by the Wirthlin organization, released just before the Geneva meeting, showed that 84 percent of respondents favor the definition of marriage as "one man and one woman," 78 percent believe the family is "the fundamental unit of society," and 50 percent agree that "families with multiple children help improve society" (in the United States this rises to 70 percent), while only 34 percent believe they are a net detriment.

Wilkins favors the establishment of a permanent secretariat for the World Congress of Families to "set a global pro-family agenda." Besides organizing future conferences, it would foster cooperation and cross-fertilization among national organizations. This transnational alliance also would serve as a growing NGO presence at U.N. forums. Austin Ruse, director of the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute and a member of the World Congress of Families planning committee, believes a bloc of 12 Latin American Catholic countries and Muslim states, working in close cooperation, could derail any proposal adverse to the traditional family.

In time, they might even bring the world body back to where it started. Carlson explains that in describing the family as "natural," the U.N.'s 1948 document recognized a profound truth—that "the human family system has its basis in human nature: that is, in the very biological and psychological makeup of men and women."

In the words of the mission statement adopted in Rome earlier this year, the natural family is the "lifelong covenant of a man and a woman" for the purposes of "satisfying the longings of the human heart to give and receive love."

Geneva was a milepost on the admittedly arduous road to an international renaissance of ideals long in disfavor with Western elites and under siege at the United Nations. ♦

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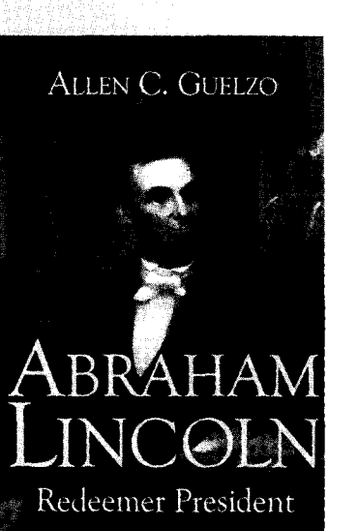

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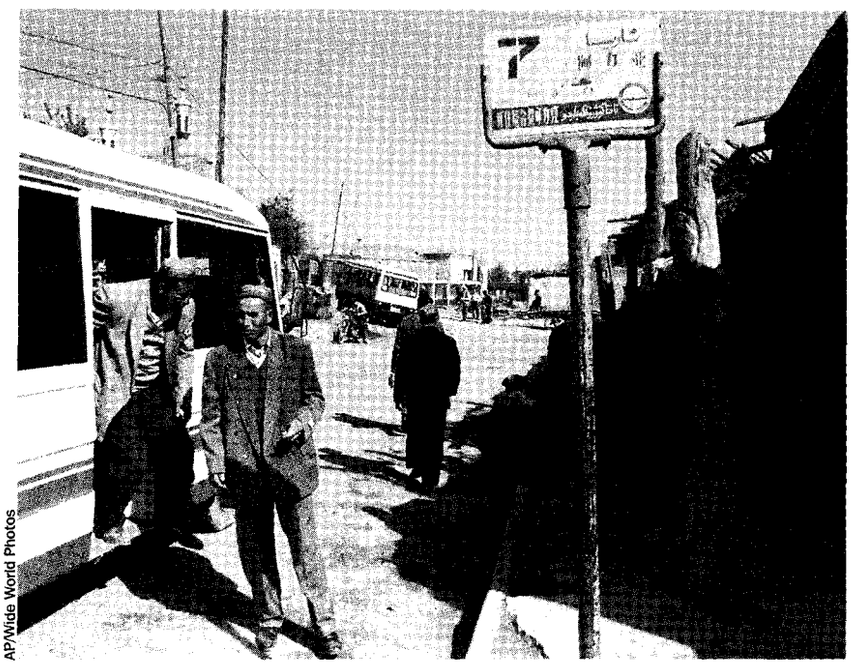
Hell, No, Uighurs Won't Go

China's suppression of Eastern Turkestan won't succeed without a fight. BY JOHN DERBYSHIRE



AP/Wide World Photos

Horse stop: Uighur men disembark from a bus in Kashgar, Eastern Turkestan.

WHEN WE THINK of China's problems with its minorities, we tend to think of Tibet. The spectacle of a picturesque and eccentric culture (the Tibetan official who met the 1904 Younghusband expedition bore the title "Grand Metaphysician") being stomped into the dust by a brutish and amoral despotism naturally arouses our sympathy.

In addition, there is the focusing presence of the Dalai Lama and the simple fact that Tibet has always had a long border with the free world, across which thousands of refugees have been able to escape. When unrest among the "national minorities" keeps China's leaders awake at night, however, it is not Tibet they are worrying about, but Eastern Turkestan.

John Derbyshire is a critic and novelist living in Huntington, New York.

It is still not widely understood in the West that Mao Zedong's greatest achievement was the re-creation of most of the old Manchu Empire. Less than half the territory of the People's Republic is ethnically Chinese. A quarter is Tibetan; a sixth is Turkic; a tenth is Mongolian.

But of all these territories, it is Eastern Turkestan that is most populous, most productive, strategically most important, and most fractious. Occupying the westernmost part of China, Eastern Turkestan is home to several million non-Chinese people speaking Turkic languages and practicing Islam. By far the largest group is the Uighurs. Precise numbers are hard to state because Chinese statistics on minority populations are deeply unreliable.

Officially there are 8 million Uighurs; there may in fact be more than 13 million. They are rapidly being swamped by incoming Chinese, most recently by more than 100,000 peasants resettled from west-central China as part of the Three Gorges Dam project. All this is of course a deliberate policy by the Beijing government, as is revealed by occasional lapses into frankness in the Chinese press. *Da Gong Bao*, Beijing's mouthpiece newspaper in Hong Kong, reported on June 2 that official policy was "to adjust the proportions of the populations of different ethnic groups in Xinjiang."

"Xinjiang"—which means "New Territory"—is the Chinese name for Eastern Turkestan. It is an abomination to the Uighurs, who say, "It may be 'New Territory' to the Chinese, but it's been our homeland since the beginning of time!" This population policy is augmented by parallel strategies for cultural annihilation that will be familiar to followers of Tibetan affairs: forced abortions, religious persecution, outlawing of local languages, suppression of any truthful discussion of the region's history, and so on.

Three factors have turned the Eastern Turkestan issue into a major headache for China's imperialists. First there was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent independence of the Central Asian republics, which are close in language, religion, and culture to the Uighurs. Second has been the coming into existence of a Uighur diaspora. Having no significant border with anyone else, refugees from Eastern Turkestan once had nowhere to go but the USSR. Now they can be found in many places, though the greatest concentration is still in Turkey. Third has been the utter failure of the Dalai Lama's calm and reasonable approach to Chinese leaders.

For 40 years His Holiness has been pleading with Beijing to let his people have some real autonomy. He has made it plain that he will settle for much less than full independence and

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has used his immense authority with Tibetans to discourage anti-Chinese violence. The result of these approaches has been a complete victory for Chinese imperialism and the near extinction of Tibetan culture in its homeland. The Uighurs have drawn the appropriate lesson.

At one time, the Uighurs had their own Dalai Lama. His name was Isa Yusuf Alptekin. Born in Eastern Turkestan, Alptekin served in the government of the short-lived Eastern Turkestan Republic in the 1940s and fled to Turkey when the republic was crushed in a joint operation by Mao and Stalin. He kept the mindset of a diplomat and in a famous incident in 1981 played host to a delegation from the Chinese embassy in Ankara.

Following that meeting, Alptekin issued a list of 31 requests to the Chinese government, covering religious freedoms, economic equality between Uighurs and Han Chinese, and truth in population statistics. The Chinese never responded. Realizing where a liberal policy toward their subject peoples was leading them, they quickly reverted to despotic norms.

Alptekin died in 1995 at age 94, and the irenic approach died with him. Current attitudes among the Uighurs can be gauged from the fact that their main expatriate organization, the Istanbul-based Eastern Turkestan National Center, is headed not by a monk but by an ex-general in the Turkish army, Reza Bekin. Even so, the ETNC is regarded as insufferably tame by yet more militant Uighur groups. Chinese dissident journalist Cao Chang-ching, who published a long and illuminating report on Eastern Turkestan in the October 11 *Taipei Times*, unearthed one group calling themselves "The Home of Eastern Turkestan Youth" who claimed 2,000 members and told him that "the Chinese only understand force." They also refer to themselves as "the Hamas of Eastern Turkestan" and brandish slogans like "Every one of us is a bomb."

This is not idle boasting; the three bomb explosions of February 1997 in Urumqi, Eastern Turkestan's capital, were only the best-reported of a large number of violent incidents in the region—including, most recently, a well-equipped attack on a Chinese missile base. The Chinese routinely report intercepting arms shipments coming into Eastern Turkestan—something they have not had to worry about in Tibet since the CIA operations of the early 1960s. There is a general feeling that progress on the Karakoram Highway, intended to link China with Pakistan, is being held up by Chinese foot-dragging, probably because they fear too-easy communications between the Uighurs and their ethnic kin in Central Asia.

It is not Buddhist monks that China faces in its western colony but Turks, cousins of those fearless warriors—the Huns, the Seljuks, the Ottomans—who terrorized Europe and the Middle East for twelve hundred years. The national symbol of the Uighur is a wolf. This is not a people that will go quietly into the long night of Chinese imperial domination. ♦

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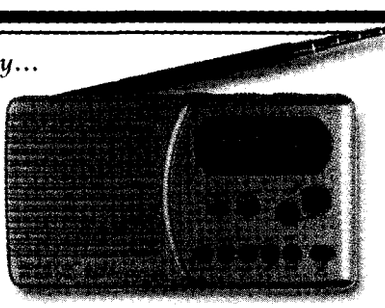

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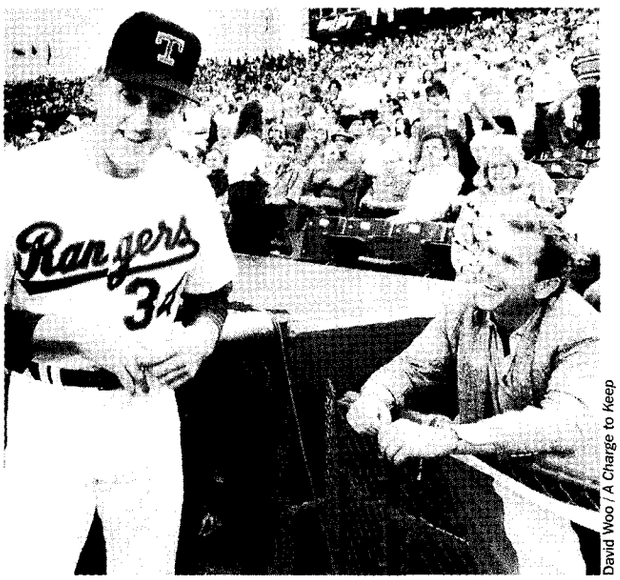
George W. Bush, Author

Most campaign books are awful, but George W. Bush's "A Charge to Keep" sets a new standard

By Andrew Ferguson

In George W. Bush's autobiography *A Charge to Keep*, which arrived in bookstores last week, there is a photograph that reveals far more about the governor than the thousands of words that come before and after it. It shows Bush in the front row of Arlington Stadium in Arlington, Texas, chatting with the great pitcher Nolan Ryan before a ballgame. At the time Bush was part-owner of the Texas Rangers. He is wearing a sport coat and khakis under a cloudless sky; the top two buttons of his shirt are open, in the manner of the Sunbelt bon vivant. His hair is tousled, he smiles richly, his face is deeply tan and unlined by care. He has the look of a man to whom life has dealt an inside straight: handsome, wealthy, with a pretty and intelligent wife, a pair of charming daughters, a lucrative and not terribly taxing job that allows ample time for lunch, working the phones, weight lifting, snapping towels with the fellas in the locker room after a morning run—a man who has arrived where he is by a series of happy accidents, and who, but for the happiest accident of all, his birth, would have been quite content to stay there.



David Woo / A Charge to Keep

Nolan Ryan with team owner George W. Bush

This is what the picture says; it is not, of course, what the book says, not in the words printed on its 253 pages. What the book says is: "We must give our prosperity a greater purpose, a purpose of peace and freedom and hope." The book says: "It's important to listen." It says: "I believe a leader should respect the faith of others." And it says: "We should educate children" and "We are America" and "Our children are the faces of our future." *A Charge to Keep* says many, many things like this, piled one on top of another, and by a strange coincidence, just as the book went on sale, *U.S. News* reported that the governor is "hurt that he is developing the image of an airhead." He's hurt? If he read this book he'd be absolutely crushed.

But he isn't an airhead—really, it should go without saying—and neither is Karen Hughes, the wily press secretary who wrote his autobiography for him. That they have produced a book so lacking in weight, so disorganized and trivial, so airily consumed by banality, is as much a consequence of the constraints they worked under as it is a reflection of their campaign's shortcomings or the candidate's inadequacies. The first of these constraints was time. In the foreword to *A Charge to Keep*, Bush/Hughes say that the governor was not inclined to write a book about his life, though he had been asked to do so. But "when I discovered that a number of other people were writing books about me, I decided to tell my story from my perspective." This implies a rush job, and

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor of The Weekly Standard.

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the implication is borne out in the book itself—in its repetition of anecdotes and phrases, its extended verbatim quotations from long-ago speeches, and the heavy padding from contemporaneous news accounts of the governor's astounding triumphs, his ups, his downs, his smiles, his frowns.

Then there are the constraints imposed by the genre. The campaign book is for the most part a flexible, forgiving mode of literary expression. In form it ranges from the dry and humorless policy tract (Bill Clinton's *Between Hope and History*, Steve Forbes's *The New Birth of Freedom*) to the goofily abstract (Bill Bradley's *Time Present, Time Past*) and speculative (Al Gore's *Earth in the Balance*), to the quotidian and earthbound memoir (the elder George Bush's *Looking Forward*, Ronald Reagan's *Where's the Rest of Me?*). Even so, certain conditions must be met for a campaign book to be successful. It must of course shamelessly boost the campaign, which requires that no unflattering evidence be admitted to the text. Because it is (usually) ghostwritten or (at the least) heavily edited by professional hands, any suggestions of genuine intimacy will be impossible. And finally, because it will never be taken seriously—and, for that matter, read—by anyone but loyal staffers, political cultists, or duty-bound reporters, it can be as boring as its authors wish.

Because it will never be read by anyone but loyal staffers and duty-bound reporters, the campaign book can be as boring as its authors wish.

By these criteria, *A Charge to Keep* is a stunning success. In particular, its use of boredom, as both a literary device and a political tactic, breaks new ground. At precisely those moments when the narrative evokes a glint of human interest, it is stalled by a platitude, hung up on an irrelevant observation, or collapses under an avalanche of extraneous detail. For example, around page 95, George W. Bush is elected governor of Texas. Deep in his slumbering cerebellum, the benumbed reader may feel a faint stir: Is something about to happen? Then—whoosh! There follow five deadening pages in which the author lists all of his major appointments—names you have never heard before, nor ever will again—including the many boards to which he had to make appointments. ("I recruited Al Gonzalez, a smart and talented . . . I asked Mike Weiss, a longtime friend . . . Mike quickly identified the brightest budget mind in the state of Texas, Albert Hawkins . . . We added Cliff Johnson . . . The Air Conditioner and Refrigeration Contractors Commission, the Fire Ant Research Management Account Advisory Committee, the Acupuncture Board. . . .")

All the reflexes of human curiosity are at once disabled; words pass from the page to the brain and then out again in the cadence of a lullaby. The effect can only be intentional. As Bush/Hughes note in the introduction, *A Charge to Keep* was written primarily to preempt the work of other biographers. George W. Bush has told his story here, and he's told it first. From now on, any contradictory accounts that other writers may offer up will therefore have to be squared with Bush's original rendering. This will, in turn, be impossible, partly because his own storytelling is so vague and discontinuous, and partly because no reader, having read *A Charge to Keep*, will remember anything about it.

I don't mean to be misleading. Bush/Hughes often achieve effects beyond boredom. Not all of these, however, can be considered intentional. There is something disembodied about the George W. Bush who wafts through his campaign book. The ghostwriter's normal method is to tape extensive interviews with his subject, then grind the recorded memories and observations into presentable prose. Evidently the taping sessions with Governor Bush didn't yield sufficient fodder; by nature and by class, Bushes are taciturn and unreflective men. So friends have been brought in, interviewed by researchers, and then quoted to fill out the narrative. This is the method of a magazine profile; in a first-person account the effect isn't so much boring as unsettling. Here the governor recalls, or fails to recall, an adult Bible class in his hometown of Midland:

> I took it seriously, with my usual touch of humor. Don [Jones, a friend] remembers a time after watching a video on Luke's depiction of John the Baptist, when the speaker asked the class to define a prophet. He was serious, but I couldn't resist. "A profit is when revenues exceed expenses, and no one has seen one around here since Elijah," I answered. Once a speaker was joking about his upbringing and said, "It's not easy being a PK"—i.e., a preacher's kid. "You ought to try being a VPK"—a Vice President's kid—was my instant comeback.

And a witty one it is, too! The quips are the governor's, but the memory is Don's. Perhaps Don should write a memoir of his days with George Bush; it may be a fuller and fleshier account than the governor has been able to give, though it could hardly be more complimentary. In any case, the uneasiness, on the reader's part, lingers and recurs. Here, in another among many exam-

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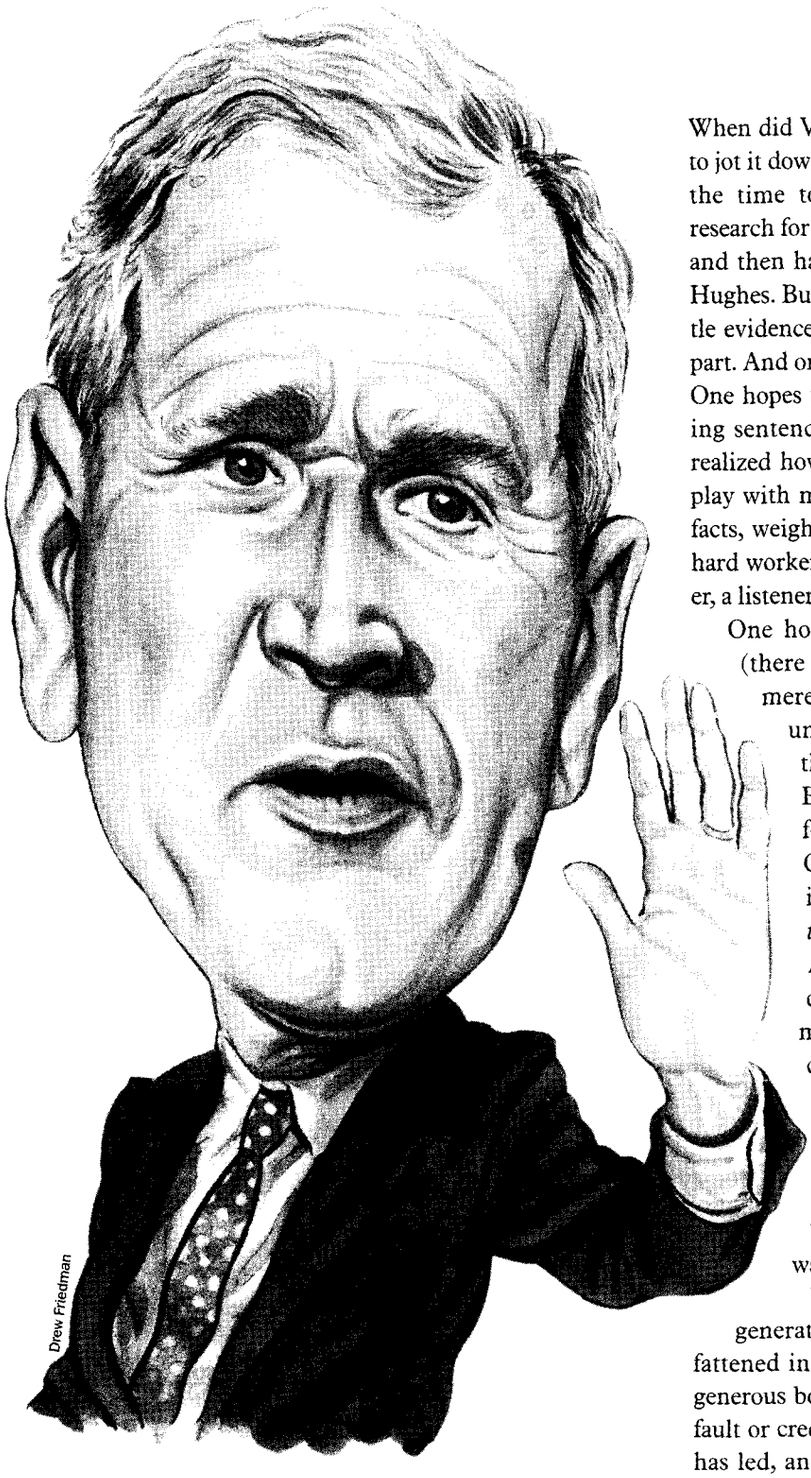
Drew Friedman

ples, the governor meets Vance McMahan, a young aide recommended by his chief of staff Karl Rove:

> Karl highly recommended him, and sent him to meet me in Dallas. "I walked into your office and there was lots of activity, phones ringing, people coming in and out, baseballs and paper everywhere. My first impression was one of tremendous energy," Vance later told me.

Now fully alert, the reader wants to ask: When? When did Vance tell you that? And how did you happen to jot it down? It is possible that the governor, who lacked the time to actually write the book, undertook the research for it, interviewing old pals, staff, and colleagues, and then handed all the notes and tapes over to Karen Hughes. But it's not likely, for in truth the book offers little evidence of any involvement at all on the governor's part. And one begins to hope, at least, that this is the case. One hopes that he didn't really approve such horn-tooting sentences as "A friend once told me that he never realized how to enjoy his children until he watched me play with mine." Or: "I am a decisive person. I get the facts, weigh them thoughtfully, and decide." Or: "I'm a hard worker and tough competitor." Or: "I'm an observer, a listener, and a learner."

One hopes that he didn't approve such sentences (there are many more)—one hopes that they are merely the gushy opinions of his ghostwriter, unwisely recast into the first person—because they carry the odor of the same overweening Baby Boomer self-regard that, until now, had found its perfect political expression in Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich. And indeed the insurmountable difficulty raised by *A Charge to Keep* is one endemic to the Baby Boomers. A campaign book, like any memoir, requires drama. And a dramatic book requires a dramatic life. Earlier generations of politicians could pull this off. TR charged up San Juan Hill, Herbert Hoover fed Europe after the First World War, FDR conquered polio, JFK survived *PT-109*, and even Jimmy Carter had to endure Billy and Miz Lillian. These were the tests by which competence was proved and character formed.

But now the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans, born after World War II, fattened in affluence, undisciplined by the easeful and generous bounty our parents created for us. Through no fault or credit of his own, this is the life George W. Bush has led, and his poor ghost labors mightily to inject it with drama, without success. Bush/Hughes list the long string of summer jobs he held, familiar to any child of the upper middle class: management trainee, messenger at a law firm, customer service rep in a stock brokerage. For anyone born after 1945, these constitute the wilderness years. George W. Bush's own personal San Juan Hill was getting his MBA at Harvard. "Business school," he writes, "was a turning point for me." There was, for starters, the application he had to fill out. "Completing it

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required taking stock of your life. It forced me to think about what I had accomplished and what I hoped to achieve."

Even the calamitous sixties, which he spent at Yale, seem to have left him eerily untouched. As the Bud cascaded from the kegs at the DKE house—where he was, in a strange foreshadowing, elected president—ominous images floated up from the TV: police dogs, assassinations, bloodbaths in rice paddies far away. His reactions, rendered in hindsight, were correct. "I was shocked . . ." he writes; "I watched, appalled. . . . I was horrified. . . ." But his experience of the sixties extended beyond the tube. "Some speakers came to campus to talk about the war," he recalls, "but my friends and I did not attend the speeches." This too is perfectly understandable. "Our DKE parties were known as some of the best on campus; we would hire bands and host big dances."

The single firsthand political memory he recounts from those years involves the insane comedian Dick Gregory, who spoke on campus about "The Negro in America." For the Negro, Gregory said, America was like a big cigarette machine into which he put money without getting a pack of cigarettes. "It was a different perspective," the governor writes, "and it made a lasting impression." In such cauldrons are compassionate conservatives forged.

Many of us under a certain age in America have led lives of ease and pleasure, untouched by hardship—one thinks of young Al Gore sweating out finals at St. Albans, or Steve Forbes fumbling with his trust fund, or Bill Bradley negotiating his salary with the Knicks—and it is no mark against George Bush (I repeat) that he has shared in the general good fortune. But anyone searching for the reasons why the governor now wishes to disrupt that life with a go at the presidency will put down *A Charge to Keep* as perplexed as ever. The last chapter consists of an extended stump speech meant to answer the question, but even more than the rest of the book, this is clearly the work of other hands. Running for president just seems to be the thing a guy does next; just as putting out a book is a thing a guy running for president does. So a guy and his ghost tell his story as best they can, and recount the little lessons learned along the way—like that time at Andover, when young George W. tried to impress his English teacher with big words he fetched from a thesaurus.

> The discussion of "lacerates" falling from my eyes did catch the teacher's attention, but not in the way I had hoped. The paper came back with a "zero" marked so emphatically that it left an impression visible all the way through to the back of the blue book. So much for trying to sound smart.

It was a mistake he would not make again. ♦

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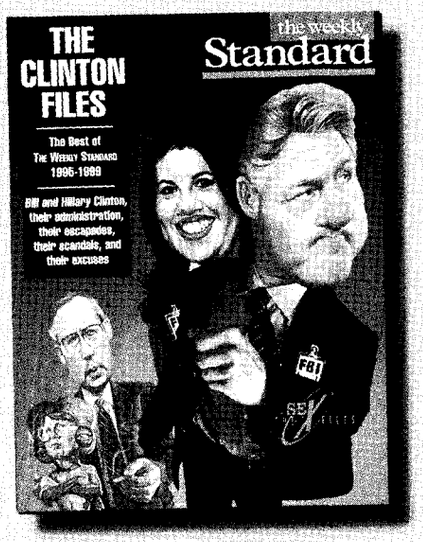

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The Yuppie Fascist

Austrian politician Jörg Haider, the success story of the European Right

AP/Wide World Photos

By Jacob Heilbrunn

Vienna, Austria

Like Patrick Buchanan, Austria's far-right leader Jörg Haider engages boldly in revisionism about World War II. A few years ago, Haider created a stir when he referred to concentration camps as "punishment camps." Then he praised Hitler's employment policies. Most recently, he declared that Winston Churchill was as big a war criminal as Stalin.

There, however, the resemblance to Buchanan ends. Haider is no jowly, balding populist ranting about the depredations of the global economy. Instead, the 49-year-old Haider has the looks of a ski instructor and exploits them to the hilt. To the fury of the conservative People's party and the horror of the leading Socialist party, the bungee-jumping, marathon-running Haider has become the coolest politician in Austria. By deftly blending nostalgia for Nazism, hatred of foreigners, and a pro-free market message, he has managed to overtake the Conservatives and vault his historically marginal Freedom party into the number two spot, winning more than 29 percent of the vote in the national election on October 3. He's done it by becoming an exotic hybrid—a yuppie fascist.

Jacob Heilbrunn is a writer in Washington, D.C.

Haider's critics portray him as a threat to democracy. In fact, though, there isn't much Austrian democracy for him to threaten. Ever since the Allied occupation ended in 1955, the Socialists and Conservatives have carved up the Alpine republic between them in a system known as "*Proporz*," or proportionality. Every major-party member carries a "party book," which is either red (for Socialists) or black (for Conservatives), and in the innumerable state-controlled activities—banking, mining, broadcasting, teaching, transportation, you name it—jobs are meted out so as to achieve the proper distribution of red and black. The dominant Socialist party has entirely co-opted the Conservatives, whose main objective is to conserve their shrinking share of power. Socialism, in other words, may have been abandoned in Eastern Europe, but not in Austria.

In this context, Haider has actually been able to depict himself as a democrat, a kind of freedom fighter battling an encrusted left-wing establishment bent not only on enforcing a politically correct interpretation of the Nazi past but also on controlling the individual's economic decisions. More than that, Haider is hip, while his stodgy Conservative and Socialist adversaries look increasingly like Politburo-era dinosaurs. With the Conservatives already reduced to the number-three party, Haider's message continues to win new adherents. Why waste time fretting about Nazism, Haider seems to say,

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when Austrians have better things to do, like buy designer clothes?

Born on January 19, 1950, in the village of Bad Goisen, Haider inherited a hatred of the Austrian establishment from his parents. His father, Robert Haider, joined the Hitler Youth in 1929 at the age of 15; then, three years later, the SA. He participated in the failed 1934 Nazi putsch in Austria and may have been involved in the murder of a customs official; in any event, he had to flee to Bavaria until the 1938 *Anschluss* with Germany. Jörg's mother, Dorothea, was also a fervent Nazi. A school teacher and member of the Nazi League of German Maidens, she was banned from teaching after the Second World War. In those years, Robert supplemented his shoemaker's income by working on the side as a party secretary for the former SS officer Friedrich Peter in the newly established League of Independents. This group, which would later become the Freedom party, was the gathering place for former Nazis supposedly integrated into an Austrian democracy. The Haiders' son would become the instrument of their revenge on the new Austria.

Unlike Germany, Austria never really faced up to its Nazi past. It saw itself as a victim of Hitler's aggression. Neither the Socialists nor the Conservatives wanted to alienate former Nazi voters, and the Socialists even discouraged émigrés from returning to the country after the war. So in high school, Jörg had no reservations about joining the Albia fraternity, where he and his chums practiced the four basic fencing moves on a straw doll labeled with the name of Simon Wiesenthal, the legendary Nazi-hunter. In class-conscious Austria, the Albia fraternity also allowed the shoemaker's son to fraternize with lawyers' and doctors' sons; according to Austrian journalist Christa Zöchling's new biography of Haider, *Light and Shadows of a Career*, this "hermetic circle" of right-wing upper-crust types further shaped his views, not to mention the fact that most of his teachers had belonged to the Nazi party. Haider cut his political teeth at an early age: In 1966, he won first prize in a debate contest in Innsbruck with a speech about the "mingling of peoples and races" in Austria. His address, cribbed from the Freedom party platform, was reprinted in the *German National and Soldiers' Newspaper*.

Haider went on to new successes. He studied law at the University of Vienna, joined the anti-Semitic fraternity Silvania, and led the Freedom party's youth wing. Although the 1968 student revolts heightened his loathing of the left, Haider shared the left's suspicion of institutions, which is why some Austrians call him the Napoleon of 1968—a conservative who deployed the tactics of the student radicals to conservative ends.

Haider's goal was to boot any remaining liberals out of the Freedom party and take it over himself. And so, upon graduation, he moved to the state of Carinthia, on the Austrian border with Slovenia. There, the constant influx of Slovenes, coupled with the memory of Yugoslavia's demands for Carinthian territory after the Second World War, provided a backdrop conducive to the flourishing of his movement. There, Haider did more than complain about foreigners; he created a new base for the Freedom party, visiting discos night after night to attract young voters, until the party became known as Haider's "*Buberlpartei,*" the boys' party.

Haider's first hurdle was to undermine the man who had employed his father—Friedrich Peter, head of the Freedom party. This project got a boost in 1975, when Simon Wiesenthal exposed Peter's membership in the SS, damaging the leader's standing in the party. Ironically, Haider profited further when Socialist chancellor Bruno Kreisky, himself a Jew, denounced Wiesenthal's "mafia methods"; Kreisky wanted to bring Peter into a coalition. Indeed, Kreisky's denunciations of Israel and embrace of Yasser Arafat and Muammar Qaddafi helped prepare the way for Haider. Lothar Höbele, a young historian at Vienna University whose dissertation defends England's appeasement of Hitler, says that Haider "reflects a 1970s Austrian consensus. . . . Kreisky made the anti-Israeli remarks no one else could make." Höbele, who has close ties to Haider and the Freedom party, added that Haider's comments on the past are bound to appeal to Austrians; Höbele said that his Nazi friends "all think they got a hard deal after 1945 and have been maligned. . . . No matter what the aims were, the Wehrmacht was a splendid outfit."

In 1986, Haider got an additional boost, when an international scandal erupted over the Nazi past of Kurt Waldheim, president of Austria and former secretary general of the United Nations. That year, Haider staged a coup in the Freedom party and became its leader. At the same time, he emerged as one of Waldheim's most vociferous defenders.

Only once did Haider go too far: In 1995, he declared that Hitler's employment policies were superior to those of the current government, and he was forced to resign as governor of Carinthia. But not for long. Haider retained his seat in parliament, and in April 1999, he won reelection as governor of Carinthia. He promptly awarded Aus-

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trian citizenship to the son of the last Austrian rabbi, who lives in Israel—an act of which he boasts whenever he is challenged over his benevolent statements about Nazis. Haider also has tried to provide himself additional insurance in matters Jewish by bringing on board the novelist Peter Sichrovsky, whose parents fled the Holocaust. Sichrovsky's latest book declares anti-fascism to be Communist dogma repackaged by the Western European left. He is currently a Freedom party delegate to the European Parliament.

But the Nazi past could carry Haider only so far. Even in Austria you can't win an election simply by appealing to old-timers. Haider's coalition allies young entrepreneurs and disaffected Socialists with old Nazis. There is something for everyone. He calls for privatization of state industries and a flat tax, which seems to go over well with business. Most effective, perhaps, has been his call for "stopping further immigration to Austria," which allowed him to cut deeply into the Socialist voter base. As Lothar Höbele explains, "Haider attracted the Reagan Democrats, the blue-collar workers. The Socialist leadership drifted into rain-forest issues. Among male voters, the Freedom party is the biggest party." Eduard Stackl, deputy editor of the newspaper *Der Standard*, agrees: "The Freedom party has become the number one worker's party in Austria."

In truth, Austria has had a large influx of foreigners since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the wars in Yugoslavia. Between 1988 and 1998, 405,000 people immigrated to Austria, a country of only 8 million. In Vienna, the city government has pushed the immigrants to the outskirts; the area around the Westbahnhof train station is inhabited mostly by foreigners, and in some schools over half the students are non-German-speakers. This may not disturb wealthy Socialists who live in downtown Vienna, but it incenses many traditional Socialist voters. So alarmed did the Socialists become at Haider's inroads among their voters that on election-eve, interior minister Karl Schlögel announced that immigration would have to end.

The Austrian political establishment has gone into overdrive to keep Haider out of the government. After the October election, the Socialists didn't even want to meet with him, while the Conservatives declared that, since they had come in third, they had no responsibility for putting together a coalition. But Haider was undaunted. He knows that the longer the Socialists and Conservatives cling together, the better his chances are in the next election. And the more the foreign press and the Israeli government attack him (Israeli foreign minister David Levy threatened to sever relations with Austria should Haider enter the government), the more popular he gets.

Indeed, in November, weeks after the election, the mood at Haider's headquarters, located behind the federal parliament in the Reichratsstrasse, was upbeat. There were posters of Haider grinning and promising change on the walls. A headline in the party's *New Freedom Newspaper* attacked Socialist chancellor Viktor Klima, demanding "An End to Ostracism: Klima must speak with the Freedom Party!"

Rushing in from a parliamentary meeting, Susanne Riess-Passer, second in command in the party, explained to me that Austria desperately needs "structural change," which is one reason the Freedom party is bound to keep growing. The only real obstacle it faces is the hateful media campaign against Haider. According to the leading Jewish organization in Austria, the Federation of Jewish Communities, the number of attacks on Jews rose dramatically in the last weeks of the election campaign. Riess-Passer said that, if true, this was their own fault. The Jews of Vienna, she declared, were responsible for "whipping up anti-Semitism" through their attacks on the Freedom party. She singled out Ariel Muzicant, head of the Federation of Jewish Communities, who had helped organize a rally against the Freedom party in November. "He's responsible," she said. "He doesn't speak with anyone from the Freedom party. It's a curious understanding of democracy and tolerance."

Before I left, Riess-Passer took me to Haider's office on the top floor to see the view of the Viennese skyline. The office was decorated with dozens of photos of Haider skiing, jogging, and hobnobbing with celebrities. Three large flags framed his desk: the Austrian; the American, in deference to Haider's love for the land of the Gap and Ralph Lauren; and the Californian, featuring the state symbol. "It's because it has a bear on it," Riess-Passer told me. "It's the same as the name of his estate, Bärental"—a property Haider's great-uncle bought from Jews forced to flee, at bargain-basement Nazi prices.

We walked past the flags, out to the special raised platform Haider has had installed on the roof next to his office so he can gaze at the federal chancellery. If the Freedom party's vote increases in the next election, the chancellery may be within his reach. Neither domestic nor international pressure sufficient to keep Haider out of the government seems likely to develop. The national mood has apparently changed. "There will be no second Waldheim affair," emphasizes Haider confederate and newspaper columnist Hans Janitschek. "This isn't about Haider. It's about Austria." ♦

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What are the facts?

Victimized by Arab Myths. Israel is the only country in the world whose legitimacy, whose "right to exist", has always been questioned. From its very beginning, from before its birth, Israel was surrounded by mortal enemies,single-mindedly obsessed with its destruction. The very day of its birth, in the truncated and minuscule territory assigned to it by the United Nations,six Arab armies invaded the newborn state. In what was clearly a biblical miracle, the invading hordes were defeated by the ragtag Israeli army.

In 1967, the same aggressors launched another attack against Israel, from the north (Syria), from the south (Egypt), and from the east (Jordan). The Six-Day War resulted in a complete rout of the Arabs, and a victory for Israeli arms that will be studied in war colleges for centuries to come.

Unable to vanquish Israel on the battlefield, the Arabs launched a propaganda war that has been very successful, and which the Jews (despite their reputation for being so "smart") have clearly and irretrievably lost.

Among the many myths propagated by the Arabs are that there is such a thing as a "Palestinian nation" (it's a concept that is not more than 40 years old); that the Israelis (Jews) are "occupiers" (if they were, who would be the sovereign that they displaced?); that Jerusalem is Islam's "third holiest city" (it's never once mentioned in the Koran, but hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible); the transformation of the age-old provinces of Judea/Samaria into the "West Bank"; the concept of "settlements" (with its connotation of illegality); and much more.

> "By its pious insistence on 'justice for the Palestinians' and pursuit of the 'peace process', by fomenting and profiting from the buildup of weapons of mass destruction solely destined for the destruction of Israel, the world actively promotes this second Holocaust."

Israel — Utterly Vulnerable. These and other myths are what fuel the insistence of the Arabs, of most of the world, and, yes, also of the United States, that Israel allow itself to be dismembered and to turn part or even most of its tiny territory over to the "Palestinians." All concerned know well—and it has been acknowledged by our military leadership—that Israel would be utterly indefensible, at the mercy of its implacable enemies, if it were to divest itself of the Jordan Valley, of the "West Bank", of the Gaza Strip, and of the Golan Heights. Why then does the world insist that Israel make itself so utterly vulnerable? Does anybody really believe that the "Palestinians", or any of the Arabs, would be appeased, that they would reconcile themselves to the existence of a diminished Israel, even if Israel were to yield everything, turn the whole country over to the Arabs, except perhaps Tel Aviv and its suburbs? Everybody knows the answer. It would be an emphatic "NO", because the very existence of Israel, in whatever reduced territory, is an intolerable insult to the Muslim Arabs, for whom Israel must be rubbed out regardless of the sacrifices to be brought.

Why does the world focus on the spurious claims of the "Palestinians", an artificially created nationality that never in recorded history had an identity or country of their own? Why is there no clamor that the French and Spanish give an independent country to their Basque minorities? How about the Kurds, who are under the heavy thumbs of the Iranians, the Turks, the Iraqis, and the Syrians? How about the Tibetans, subjugated by the Chinese; and so many others? Nobody cares. Nobody wants to "liberate" them. It's only the Jews who are being asked to dismember their tiny country, less than half of the size of San Bernardino County in California.

The Arab countries (and Iran) are frantically arming themselves with the most dreadful weapons of mass destruction. As the world knows, it is for one purpose only—their only political objective and their relentless obsession—namely the destruction of Israel. Two or three nuclear weapons would wipe Israel off the map once and for all. Retaliation by Israel, the destruction of major Arab cities, and millions of Arab casualties, would not deter the Muslim fanatics from pursuing their goal. For them, it would be a small price to pay. With Israel dismembered, with five or six Arab states poised to attack with weapons of mass destruction, with 40,000 Palestinian "police" armed to the teeth in Israel's midst, can anybody really doubt that a second Holocaust, even more terrible than the first one, is just about upon us? During the Nazi Holocaust, the whole world stood silently by and didn't lift a finger to prevent the most gruesome slaughter of innocents in the history of the world. In fact, many who were given the opportunity joyfully and enthusiastically participated in the bloodbath. By its pious insistence on "justice for the Palestinians" and pursuit of the "peace process", by fomenting and profiting from the buildup of weapons of mass destruction solely destined for the destruction of Israel, the world actively promotes this second Holocaust. Deep down inside, does the world really want the Jews to live or to disappear?

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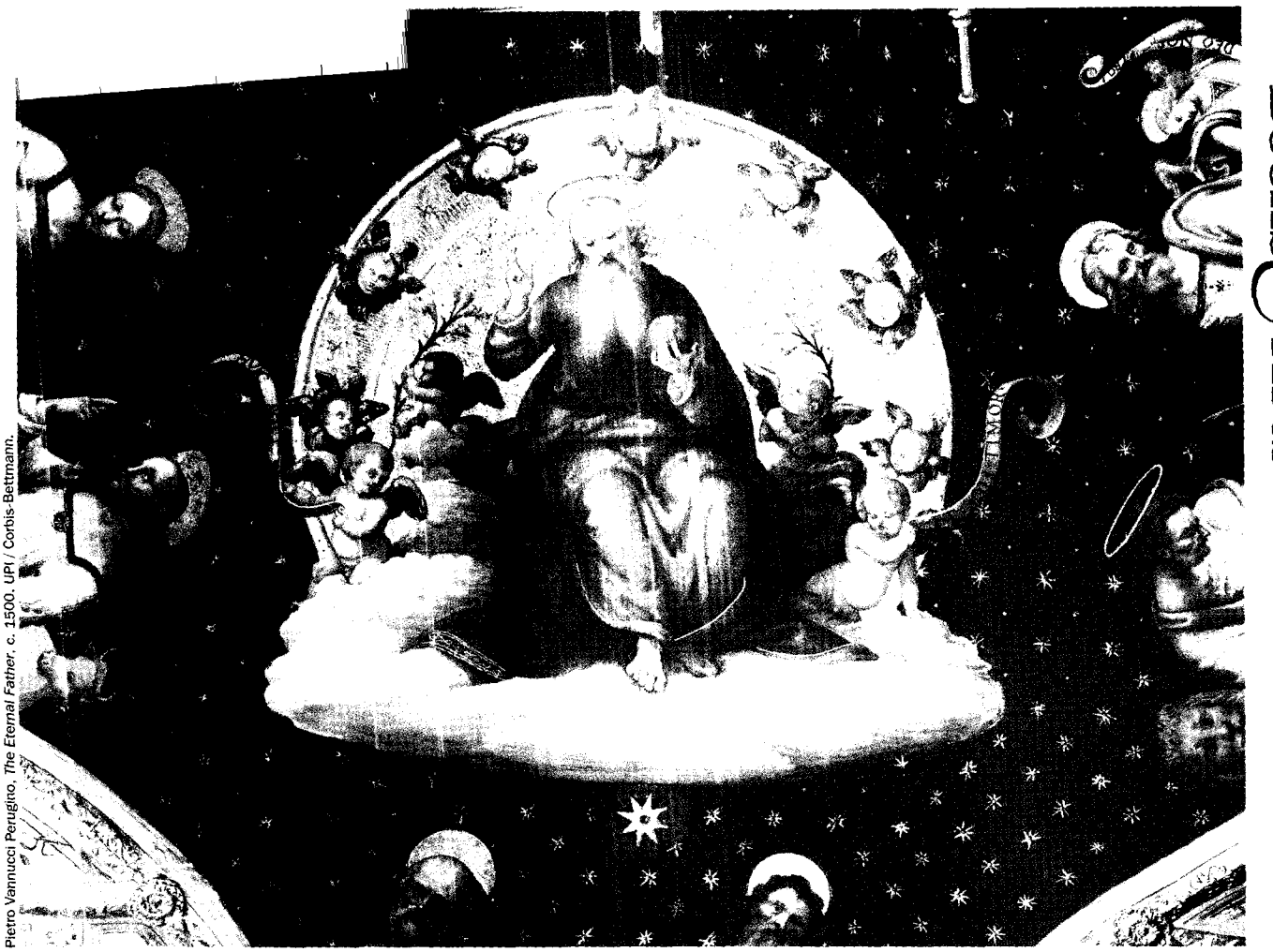

Pietro Vannucci Perugino, *The Eternal Father*, c. 1500. UPI / Corbis-Bettmann.

The God of the Bestseller List

BY ALAN JACOBS

I take as my text the words of a little girl to Melvin Morse, author of the bestselling *Closer to the Light: Learning from the Near Death Experience of Children*. As Dr. Morse explains it, the girl had died and gone to Heaven, only to be resuscitated and brought back to this world. And when he asked her what she had learned from her Visit to the Beyond, she considered the question carefully before answering, "It's nice to be nice."

Alan Jacobs teaches in the English department at Wheaton College.

When I was a teenager in the 1970s, magazines carried ads for posters, and the most popular of those posters offered a meditation, in what I suspect was intended to be poetic prose, called "Desiderata." Many people have come across it at some time or another, at least its more famous lines:

You are a child of the universe,
no less than the trees and the stars.
You have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding
as it should.
Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace with your soul.
With all its sham, drudgery,
and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.

What's particularly noteworthy about this little document is the popular conviction that it is a piece of antique wisdom, produced many centuries ago. Some of the posters identified it as "medieval" and claimed that it had been written by a monk; others dated its composition quite specifically to 1692; still others combined the two, apparently in the belief that 1692 was in the Middle Ages. (The date seems to derive from the rector of an Episcopal church in Baltimore, who typed out "Desiderata" some forty years ago on stationery that prominently featured the 1692 founding date of his church. Photocopying and careless reading did the rest.)

In fact, "Desiderata" was written by a man from Terre Haute, Indiana, named Max Ehrmann in 1927. Ehrmann was a lawyer who worked at various times as a deputy state's attorney and a credit manager for his brother's manufacturing company—and these items from his vita may be significant. His attempt to articulate a peaceable, serene prospectus for daily life suggests that his primary concern was to maintain a sanguine and mystical temperament in a corporate and bureaucratic environment:

Enjoy your achievements
as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career,
however humble;

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it is a real possession
in the changing fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs;
for the world is full of trickery.

"Desiderata" is a masterpiece, of sorts, because it so perfectly completes the translation of nineteenth-century American Romanticism into the terms of modern middle-class life. You can see the process beginning to unfold back in 1836, when the Boston Transcendentalist Bronson Alcott asked a student at his Temple School about the mission of his soul—and the student replied, "I think the mission of my soul is to sell oil." Max Ehrmann is the perfect apostle of that prescient boy's gospel.

But "Desiderata" is scarcely the final word on the subject. Ehrmann's descendants now populate American bestseller lists as the stars fill the sky. The current bumper crop of books celebrating the joys of amorphous and sanguine spirituality seems to find an especially appreciative audience among people whose daily lives are spent in bureaucratized environments which, they feel, oppress their spirits. There are so many of these books that even listing them is a challenge, especially since they tend to proliferate like some uncontrollable malignancy. Clearly it wasn't enough to have the 1993 bestseller *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, for we now have reached *A Sixth Bowl of Chicken Soup for the Soul*—to say nothing of *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul* (the most popular of them all, with over three million copies in print), *Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work*, *Chicken Soup for the Golfer's Soul*, and many others.

Apparently there are a lot of people out there with no desire to vary their menu, but if they ever do drain the soup bowl of life to the dregs, they may join the millions who have thrilled to Betty Eadie's account of her "journey through death and beyond," *Embraced by the Light*. She and Melvin Morse and Raymond A. Moody Jr. (whose 1975 *Life After Life* has sold over fourteen million copies) dominate the enormous market for books that promise a sweet pastoral Beulah Land lies in store for us: No waiting, these authors all seem to say, no Day of Judgment, just immediate admission to the Place Where Everyone Is Nice. (If you wish to know more, please consult Moody's afterlife Web site, *www.lifeafterlife.com*.)

Anyone who reads these books, and the multitudes like them, will soon realize that their counsels and messages are somewhat less than earth-shakingly original and profound. But that is precisely the point. The popularity of "Desiderata" arose in large part from its power to give expression to the hopeful desires of many people: that "the world is unfolding as it should," that I am "a child of the universe," that, in short, "it's nice to be nice."

Conversations with God
An Uncommon Dialogue
by Neale Donald Walsch
Putnam, 211 pp., $22.95

A Return to Love
Reflections on the Principles of a Course in Miracles
by Marianne Williamson
HarperPerennial, 308 pp., $14 paper

Chicken Soup for the Soul
101 Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit
by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen
Health Communications, 304 pp., $24 paper

Closer to the Light
Learning from the Near Death Experience of Children
by Melvin Morse, with Paul Perry
Ivy, 226 pp., $5.99 paper

Embraced by the Light
The Most Profound and Complete Near-Death Experience Ever
by Betty J. Eadie
Bantam, 147 pp., $6.99 paper

Life After Life
by Raymond A. Moody Jr.
Bantam, 184 pp., $6.99 paper

In the Meantime
Finding Yourself and the Love You Want
by Iyanla Vanzant
Simon & Schuster, 326 pp., $13 paper

But this cannot be the whole story of the success of these books offering this vaguely spiritual message of consolation. And there is, in fact, a deeper reason for the American fascination with this kind of spirituality: It plays to the passion for having the validity of our desires confirmed by witnesses from the distant past or beyond the grave.

This phenomenon can be seen most clearly in two of the most immensely popular American spirituality books in recent years: Marianne Williamson's 1992 *A Return to Love* and Neale Donald Walsch's 1995 *Conversations with God*. Each has sold millions of copies and produced its innumerable sequels and spinoffs (Gutenberg's carcinoma striking again); Walsch's new *Friendship With God: An Uncommon Dialogue* was published on October 25, and immediately leapt into the top ten on the *New York Times* bestseller list. But what the originals mostly reveal is how deeply we Americans crave the echoing testimony of other times and places—as long as it remains merely an echo, and doesn't threaten to tell us anything unfamiliar or otherwise disagreeable. "Desiderata," in its guise as a medieval monkish meditation, brings us a confirmation of the present from the past; its recent descendants, the books of Williamson and Walsch, offer us a still louder echo: God's resounding endorsement of our every craving.

Walsch acquired what he calls "God's latest word on things" through a highly traditional method: a kind of automatic writing, in which Walsch claims to have become the Deity's amanuensis (though one with the power to scribble his own questions and responses). And what does God reveal to Neale Donald Walsch? Well, for one thing, that religious institutions, persons of religious authority, and the Bible "are not authoritative sources" for "truth about God." Instead, God says, here's what we do if we want to know about Him: "Listen to your feelings. Listen to your Highest Thoughts. Listen to your experience. Whenever any one of these differ from what you've been told by your teachers, or read in your book, forget the words."

This is certainly encouraging (not that you haven't heard it before from Timothy Leary, Abbie Hoffman, and the guy who makes those "Question Authority" bumper stickers). But a reader with even the dimmest spark of critical reflection might be tempted to

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ask, "How can I tell my Highest Thoughts from my lower and presumably unworthy thoughts?"

This is a problem Walsch's God doesn't know quite how to address. He likes the sound of capitalized phrases: "Highest Thoughts" and "Who You Are" and things like that. But he is also at pains, repeatedly, to say that there is "no such thing" as right or wrong, good or bad, better or worse. "There is only what serves you, and what does not." And perhaps this is the key to identifying our Highest Thoughts: They are the ones most perfectly self-serving.

Take our thoughts about money, for instance. At one point, Walsch's God suggests that we need to "outgrow" a love of money, but when Walsch complains that he is financially strapped—"What is blocking me from realizing my full potential regarding money?"—God responds with almost gushing sympathy: "You carry around a feeling that money is bad." If only Walsch would stop feeling guilty, then he could liberate himself to make and enjoy *lots* of money. Here's a counsel Walsch is quick to warm to. "I see I have a lot of work to do," he says with evident relish. Presumably, now that *Conversations with God* has been on bestseller lists for almost four years—it's still number twenty on the *New York Times* hardcover nonfiction list—he has had ample opportunity to cultivate the requisite virtue.

Yale University Press

Paolo Véronese, The Vision of Saint Helena, *c. 1560.*

The God of Marianne Williamson's *A Return to Love* bears striking similarities to the one with whom Neale Donald Walsch hangs out—which seems a confirmation of sorts. In any case, Williamson's book is also based on a revelation given through automatic writing, though in this case she was not the recipient. She draws on a hefty volume called *A Course in Miracles*, which came about in 1965 when Helen Schucman, a professor of medical psychology at Columbia University, heard a voice speaking to her that she came to believe was the voice of Jesus. Her colleague William Thetford served as amanuensis as the revelations poured forth; eventually the transcriptions made their way into print. (In the copy I saw, Jesus begins by speaking these words to Dr. Schucman: "This is A Course In Miracles®. Please take notes." One wonders who registered the trademark and where the royalties go.) But if Schucman and Thetford were the evangelists, writing this new Gospel, Marianne Williamson has turned out to be their Apostle Paul, spreading the good news far beyond its original source.

Aside from the dependence on automatic writing or "scribing," another feature shared by Walsch and Williamson is their retaining of much of the language of traditional Christianity, even down to the identification of God as a Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (It's Walsch who occasionally inserts references to God as "Mother," while Williamson uses "He" and "Him" throughout.) A cynical reader might see this as an attempt to borrow some external authority—especially since the resemblance to Christian doctrine is merely verbal. Walsch, for instance, reinterprets the Father as "knowing," the Son as "experiencing," and the Holy Spirit as "being." Likewise, Williamson

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says that the Holy Spirit "has been given by God the job of . . . outsmarting our self-hatred. The Christ does not attack our ego; He transcends it." In *A Course in Miracles*—and remember, this is Jesus Christ speaking—she quotes, "Do not make the pathetic error of 'clinging to the old rugged cross.' The only message of the crucifixion is that you can overcome the cross. Until then you are free to crucify yourself as often as you choose. This is not the Gospel I intended to offer you." (In other words, "Forget that 'Take up your cross and follow me' stuff—I was misquoted.")

"In the eyes of God," Williamson explains, "we're all perfect," and our job is merely to recognize that. Evil is an illusion. Moreover, "the word Christ is a psychological term. . . . Christ refers to the common thread of divine love that is the core and essence of any human mind." A century and a half ago, Ludwig Feuerbach brought as his gravest charge against Christianity that it is the projection of our own desires—a notion cheerfully accepted by both Walsch and Williamson, who are, when it suits them, pantheists, seeing God in all things and therefore God in us and *as* us. We like having a God who is a projection of our desires, because that God won't say anything we don't want to hear.

It never seems to have occurred to any of these authors to question the validity of what they were hearing, or to notice that when other people in the past, or in other cultures, have claimed to hear God speaking, He seems to have said very different things and to have exhibited a very different character. (The vision granted to the fourteenth-century mystic Juliana of Norwich, for example, began with an image of a crown of thorns from which blood flowed copiously; only after encountering such an image did she arrive at her famous conclusion that "all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.")

I believe that I, in any case, would have been not only surprised but disappointed if I heard God speaking and He told me nothing that I couldn't have found expressed more eloquently by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, or for that matter by Dale Carnegie and Gail Sheehy. Imagine coming down from Mount Sinai with glowing countenance, only to have to tell the assembled masses, "I have heard God, and He is Norman Vincent Peale."

Yale University Press

Nicolas Poussin, The Annunciation, *1657.*

How do we account for the tranquil composure, the utter lack of critical suspicion, with which Walsch and Williamson and all their kind receive their remarkably unimaginative gospels? Sad to say, the answer appears obvious: They share the universal human susceptibility to flattery, and the gods who speak to them offer nothing but flattery. "I have nothing to tell you that you don't already know," He says. "You have understood yourself, your neighbors, and your social environment with admirable clarity. Your only problem is that you don't trust your own discernment. I can neither correct nor admonish you, but merely encourage you to follow your natural inclinations, which are infallible." Or, as Walsch's God puts it, "You all think very highly of yourself, as rightly you should."

That's pretty much what these books are all about. Thus Iyanla Vanzant concludes the acknowledgments page of her popular *In the Meantime: Finding Yourself and the Love You Want* by writing, "And I would humbly like to acknowledge my Self for being willing to move through the fear, denial, confusion, and anger required to figure out why I had to write this book," and concludes the book by saying to her reader, "You, my dear, have become the light of the world—the loving light. I beseech you to do everything in your power to let your light shine." Having looked upon themselves with smitten wonderment, these authors turn and offer us the chance to indulge in the same self-celebratory gaze. (Thanks.)

All our problems, on this account, are problems of perception: We do not see things clearly. Williamson tells the story of how, when she was working as a cocktail waitress, she was unhappy until she had this realization: "This isn't a bar, and I'm not a waitress. That's just an illusion. Every business is a front for a church, and I'm here to purify the thought forms, to minister to the children of God." (But could you bring me my martini first and purify the thought forms when you're on break?) Therefore it is not moral growth, but

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visual or perceptual retraining that we need. And, *mirabile dictu*, what is obscured by our now-clouded sight is our own virtue. Back in the Middle Ages, people who were considered wise and discerning used to think that people are blind to their own moral failings. But now God has appeared to explain that just the opposite is true: It turns out that our moral *successes* are what we habitually disregard.

What all these books most fundamentally reject is the notion that our wills may be twisted or bent. The God of these authors never for a moment questions, or allows us to question, the validity of our desires: He merely offers superior means for realizing those desires. Thus His willingness to serve as Neale Donald Walsch's financial adviser. And Williamson's book, while it may seem at times to be more directive and to require more self-criticism—"God's plan works" and "Yours doesn't," she says at one point—in fact relies just as much as Walsch's on self-interest and self-congratulation. We should choose God's plan because it's the one that will give us what we want. "We must face our own ugliness," claims Williamson, but only to discover that it's either superficial or illusory: "The ego isn't a monster. It's just the *idea* of a monster." When we see more clearly, the bad idea disappears, to be replaced by the image of a "dashing prince." Looking back at her life, Williamson says, "there's one thing I'm very sure of: I would have done better if I had known how." We do no evil, we just make "mistakes."

Several years ago, when Woody Allen was asked to explain his affair with his wife's adopted daughter, he offered this verbal shrug: "The heart wants what it wants." This is a tautology of immense moral significance, because it indicates that there is no power capable of interrogating, much less redirecting, the heart that wants—the heart that does nothing but want. The God of these books congratulates the heart for wanting and stifles the voice of mind or conscience that would offer dissent or even query. He accomplishes this stifling by proclaiming that He merely echoes—as the entire universe merely echoes—the human heart's howl of appetite.

Am I, after all, a "child of the universe"? It's worth remembering that the phrase doesn't originate with Max Ehrmann. In Dickens's *Bleak House*, the congenitally feckless Harold Skimpole, upon seeing the orphan Esther Summerson, cries out, "She is the child of the universe," only to have the more discerning John Jarndyce reply, "The universe makes rather an indifferent parent, I am afraid."

But in one sense an indifferent parent is precisely what we want: a God who neither instructs nor disciplines, who offers neither warning nor chastisement, but who smiles wryly at our peccadilloes and laughs warmly at our charming idiosyncrasies—not a Father in Heaven but a Grandfather, as C.S. Lewis once put it.

This indifference has its dark and terrible side. Without instruction or discipline or warning or counsel, we wander witlessly in a Universe whose child we may be, but which is populated by our siblings, people just like us—which is to say, people who ardently pursue goods that are incompatible with the aspirations of their neighbors, as Thomas Hobbes pointed out way back in those Middle Ages (that is, circa 1650). The numbers of us who want to be the starting quarterback or the homecoming queen or the new executive vice president far exceed the number of desirable roles and places, and they always will. And people whose greed and lust have been certified by a celestial Parent prove—when faced with the inevitable obstacles to their aspirations—to be anything but "nice" and to be anything but concerned with "purifying the thought forms."

This is the constant threat of what Hobbes called "the war of all against all," and there's nothing "illusory" about *that* war. The irresponsibility of people like Walsch and Williamson lies in their propagating a merely verbal Deity to stroke and console our desiring hearts, reserving His condemnation only for those who would remind us, in the immortal words of the Rolling Stones, that "you can't always get what you want." If Mick Jagger can figure it out, may we not expect as much of God? ♦

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Historical Conquest

Robert Conquest's essays on history at the end of the twentieth century. BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Robert Conquest is the great historian of Stalinism, with a fair claim to be the great historian of twentieth-century Russia. And yet from Brezhnev's era through Gorbachev's, his books seemed to go out of print as fast as he could write them. When *The Great Terror* was published in 1968, its meticulously documented account of Stalin's purges and show trials was dismissed or ignored by liberal academics and Sovietologists. Same with *The Harvest of Sorrow*, his 1986 account of the government-engineered famine that killed upwards of five million Ukrainians in the winter of 1932-33. Nor was anyone inclined to listen to Conquest in the early 1960s, when, well before the more celebrated jeremiads of André Amalrik, he became the first to speak of a "present general crisis of the Soviet system."

Reflections on a Ravaged Century
by Robert Conquest
Norton, 317 pp., $27.95

To a degree unusual even for the historian of a contentious period, Conquest faced a double combat: first, against his unusually tricky subject matter, muddied by scanty information and willful propaganda; and second, against those with a vested interest in undermining the whole idea of finding out the truth about Soviet communism. Conquest's latest book, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*, may not be the best introduction to Conquest the historian—the indefatigable packrat of data, the judicious sifter-out of propaganda, the masterful narrator with a pitch-perfect sense of historical drama. But, by giving us a window into his mind, it shows how Conquest was able to draw wholly accurate conclusions about Russia where thousands of others—with similar backgrounds, similar education, and similar access to data—were led astray.

Two kinds of obscurantism permitted communism not just to survive but to enjoy a certain prestige well into the 1980s. First was Communist propaganda. Conquest was immune to it, possibly because he had been educated in the histories of the Greeks and Romans, not the utopias of modern political visionaries. He likened Russia to an atavistic despotism, rather than a progressive idyll. And he was skeptical of modern historians' reliance on official documents—even slanted ones—as the last arbiter in any dispute.

The "soft" propaganda churned out by fellow travelers in academia and journalism was another obstacle—and arguably more pernicious. Marxism was a protean doctrine, with all the advantages of both its simplicity and its complexity. It was simple enough to satisfy half-wits but complex enough to require an interpreter caste. The Sovietophile biographer and historian Isaac Deutscher and the English Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm emerge as the true goats of the narrative (much as George Orwell and the English historian of Russia, Leonard Schapiro, stand as its heroes). It was Deutscher who peddled the transparently non-factual line that the West "started" the Cold War, since "it was only after the Communists had been ejected from the French and Italian governments that Stalin began to eject the anti-Communists from the Eastern European governments."

But it is Hobsbawm, with his continuing insistence that the building of Stalinist concentration camps was justified by the hopes of a radiant future, whom Conquest finds most repellent. Conquest clearly has Hobsbawm in mind when he snickers at historians' "remarkable scraping of the barrel" for proletarian uprisings in nineteenth-century Britain. "To read some writers, one would think that the nineteenth century consisted largely of the Peterloo Massacre, the Tolpuddle Martyrs, and Bloody Sunday," Conquest writes. "The search for, and exaltation of, armed clashes seems no more than a weak version of that patriotic romanticism about battles so much sneered at by people perfectly happy with this left-wing equivalent."

Non-Marxists were just as credulous. H.G. Wells, after visiting Stalin, said he had "never met a man more candid, fair, and honest." The *New York Times*'s Walter Duranty denied in print evidence of the Ukrainian famine that he had seen with his own eyes. (Conquest believes Duranty was blackmailed over sex.) Sidney and Beatrice Webb noted that Lenin had predicted in 1922 that treachery could undermine the revolution—"a forecast," they later wrote, "which was borne out by the evidence in the Moscow Trials of 1937." British diplomat Sir Bernard Pares believed that Stalin's show trials were real trials, on the grounds that "the bulky verbatim reports were in any case impressive."

Conquest's constant preoccupation is to avoid what Orwell called the "lure of the profound," for he finds Big Ideas and Big Ideologies pernicious "mind traps." "Socialism is not a synonym for humanitarianism," Conquest says, though millions of otherwise decent people long thought it was. For Orwell, the obvious antidote to ideologies was the blockheaded common sense of the intellectually un-chic working classes. But Conquest understands, in a way that Orwell did not, that common sense is not a perfect solution, either. Common sense fails because it is parochial.

Christopher Caldwell is senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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At a basic level, Conquest writes, "people could not bring themselves to believe the horrors of Stalinism"—or Hitlerism, for that matter. Neville Chamberlain's great flaw, in this view, was not that he was unprincipled or cowardly. It was that he thought he could understand Hitler by taking the worst fellow he had ever met on the Birmingham City Council and extrapolating from there.

To say that Conquest is an enemy of ideology does not mean that he is out of his depth or impatient when discussing it. His understanding of ideology is humanistic and subtle, and it takes him to two important questions. First is the matter, much discussed in intellectual circles for the last decade, of whether and how Hitler's crimes can be compared to Stalin's. Conquest is circumspect on the subject, understanding that such comparisons can be flippant and crass. A French interviewer for *Le Monde* once asked Conquest whether he thought the Holocaust "worse" than Stalin's crimes. "I answered yes I did," Conquest recalls, "but when the interviewer asked why, I could only answer honestly with 'I feel so.'" Nonetheless, he adds, "Whatever view one takes, without feeling the Holocaust one cannot feel, or understand, Stalinism."

That brings him to the second question, of whether Stalin's mass murder was inevitable. One of the reasons we take Nazism so much more seriously than communism is that we assume Nazi ideology leads directly to the depravities we associate with it, while Communist barbarism is a matter of "excesses," of mis- or over-application of Marxist doctrine. Conquest does not reject this distinction out of hand. But he clearly tends to the idea that the violence of Stalinism was inherent to the ideology. Revolutionary despotisms must institute terror, since "it is obvious enough that any radical dictatorship with a program involving the destruction of whole classes or races is bound to rely on a larger degree of terror than a 'reactionary' regime needs." But Conquest also sees that such terror has a tendency to become omnivorous, because Communists must soon institute purges against their own, as well.

In a less bloody way, it was the same logic in Soviet ideology that caused the Cold War. The end of hostilities in 1945 put the Soviet Union into a dire crisis. Millions of soldiers had seen the West—or even Poland and the Balkans, which were vastly more prosperous. Naturally, they sought social relaxation, regional autonomy, and private property once peacetime came. Such wishes were incompatible with Stalinism—and could be thwarted only if the USSR were kept on a war footing. Conquest notes: "The Cold War, as it actually turned out, was not inevitable. But over a longer period some similar confrontation must have developed."

It is not as if, with the Cold War finally over, we have escaped the dangers of Marxist habits of thought. Conquest sees a "family resemblance" between modern statist attitudes and old totalitarian ones—particularly in the American academy and among the more utopian architects of the European Union.

With their reverence for "activism," their worship of the false god of "education," and particularly their "notion of an enemy class, or sex, or race, determined to oppose all change," the modern politically correct classes are practicing a Manichean politics that bears watching—since causes are always an excuse for people to behave badly without guilt. "To congratulate oneself on one's warm commitment to the environment," Conquest says, "or to peace, or to the oppressed, and think no more is a profound moral fault." That sentiment summarizes fairly neatly Conquest's stance on contemporary politics.

Conquest's friend Kingsley Amis once wrote that when an American publisher wanted to reissue *The Great Terror* in the late 1980s, he asked Conquest if he would mind giving the book a new title. Conquest supposedly replied, "Well, perhaps *I Told You So, You F—ing Fools*. How's that?" The story doesn't exactly ring true. But one believes it with all the fervent credulity of a fellow traveler. ♦

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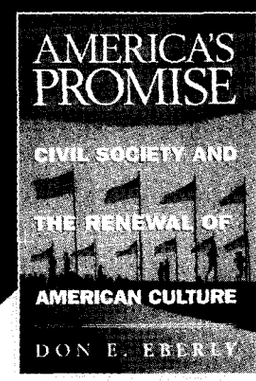

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The Cat in the Hat Fights Back

The political and World War II cartoons of Dr. Seuss.

BY JAMES ROSEN

Nearly two decades before *The Cat in the Hat* became, upon its publication in 1957, one of the most popular children's books of all time, a little known author-illustrator named Theodor Seuss Geisel drew political cartoons for *PM*, the now-defunct New York daily, using his pen name, "Dr. Seuss."

Long forgotten, these trenchant cartoons, more than four hundred in all, were unknown even to the Pulitzer committee that honored Dr. Seuss in 1984—by which time some eighty million Dr. Seuss books dotted the planet. But they've now been unearthed by University of Massachusetts history professor Richard H. Minear, and roughly half of them appear in Minear's *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel.*

. . . and the Wolf chewed up the children and spit out their bones . . . But those were Foreign Children and it really didn't matter."

All cartoons: New Press.

Beginning in 1941, Dr. Seuss's single-panel, black-and-white cartoons zeroed in on "appeasers" who opposed Allied intervention against Adolf Hitler. Dr. Seuss depicted Charles Lindbergh wearing a gas mask and pitching trash from the "Nazi Anti-Semite Stink Wagon" in a cartoon with the caption "Spreading the Lovely Goebbels Stuff."

Initially Dr. Seuss urged American entry into World War II, and after Pearl Harbor, he kept up a steady stream of "What-Have-*You*-Done-To-Help-Today?" cartoons. A graybeard sitting beneath a 1973 calendar regales his grandson: "There we were . . . Japs to the left of us! Germans to the right! Closing in . . . ! Did I run? I did not! Unyielding, I sat in this chair and groused about the annoying shortage of fuel oil!"

In Dr. Seuss's skewering of 1940s political figures, we see what fellow Pulitzer-winning cartoonist Art Spiegelman, in an eloquent introduction, calls Dr. Seuss's "signature zaniness." "The greatest pleasure," writes Spiegelman, "lies in watching the artist develop his goofily surreal vision while he delivers the ethical goods. The unique galumphing menagerie of Seussian fauna, the screwball humor and themes that later enraptured millions (as well as earning millions of dollars for the artist), come into focus in these early drawings that were done with urgency on very short deadlines."

PM's readers even got a bit of verse entitled "Sauerkraut Symphony," accompanying the image of a tuba player atop the New York *Daily News* building sounding "discord" over the city:

A GRUDGE, blowing hard as he's able
Sits high on his Tower of Babel,
And millions he treats
To the same brassy bleats
That Hitler oft feeds us by cable.

James Rosen is a Washington correspondent for the Fox News Channel.

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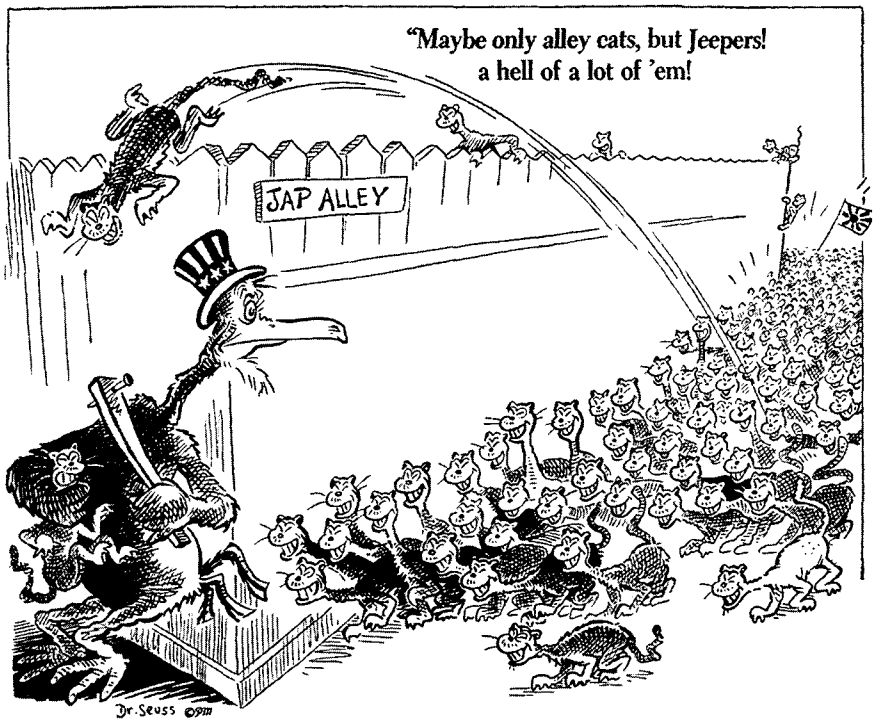

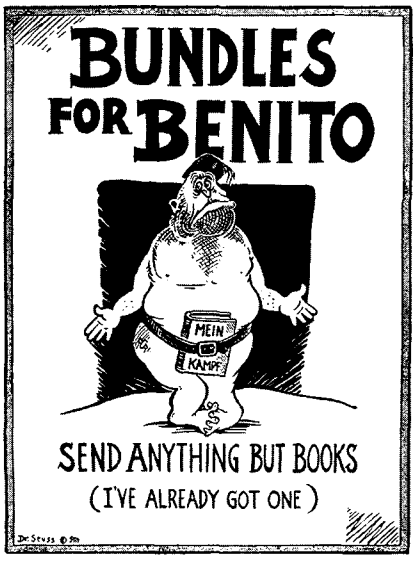

Dr. Seuss Goes to War
The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel
by Richard H. Minear
New Press, 272 pp., $25

Yet for all the familiar touches—the loopy poetry, the feathered creatures, the steam-pipe contraptions—this is not the Dr. Seuss readers remember. His Fascist-era themes occasionally prove jarring. The book's most bloodcurdling panel, from July 1942, shows Hitler in a dark forest, brandishing a noose and surrounded by hanged Jews, singing merrily with French collaborationist Pierre Laval: "Only God can make a tree / To furnish sport for you and me!"

Another panel, drawn in October 1941, features a grandmother (labeled "America First") reading approvingly to youngsters from a swastika-stamped storybook called *Adolf the Wolf*: "And then the Wolf chewed up all the children and spit out their bones. . . . But those were *Foreign Children* and it really didn't matter."

To his credit, Dr. Seuss consistently decried racism. "Gracious! Was that in my head?" a bewildered John Q. Public asks, after Uncle Sam sprays "Mental Insecticide" in Public's ear, dislodging an ugly "Racial Prejudice Bug." The artist's "progressive" philosophy, however, did not cover the Japanese. In countless cartoons, buck-toothed, slit-eyed, pig-nosed "Japs" are seen threatening America.

Within seventy-two hours of the bombing of Pearl Harbor (and some fifty years before Spiegelman's celebrated *Maus* and *Maus II* depicted the Germans as cats and Jews as mice), Dr. Seuss envisioned the Japanese as cats. Surging down "Jap Alley," tails menacingly aloft, an onrushing mob of grinning, nearsighted Japanese cats prompts an alarmed Uncle Sam eagle (wearing a distinctly *Cat in the Hat* top hat) to say, as he beats one cat senseless: "Maybe only alley cats, but Jeepers! A hell of a lot of 'em!" *PM*'s readers wrote to protest Dr. Seuss's depictions of German dachsunds but voiced no objection to his vision of hordes of bespectacled, TNT-toting Japanese-Americans forming a Fifth Column in the United States.

If *Dr. Seuss Goes to War* presages the peculiar panache that later made Dr. Seuss a successful children's author, it also reveals the man's inconsistent political worldview. Indeed, the same man who in 1984 published *The Butter Battle Book*, a polemic for nuclear disarmament written for children, thirty years earlier authored *Horton Hears a Who!*, admittedly based on a postwar visit to Japan.

Horton, an elephant (read: the United States), learns to help a civilization of tiny beings living on a speck of dust called Who-ville (read: Japan). Given the extensive American bombing of Japanese cities in World War II—which destroyed half of Japan's sixty largest cities and left more than half a million civilians dead—Minear marvels at Dr. Seuss's "willful amnesia" in having the mayor of Who-ville tell Horton:

> *"My friend," came the voice,*
> *"you're a very fine friend.*
> *You've saved all us folks*
> *on this dust speck no end.*
> *You've saved all our houses,*
> *our ceilings and floors.*
> *You've saved all our churches*
> *and grocery stores."*

Mysteriously, the artist (who abandoned postgraduate study at Oxford and conferred the "Dr." on himself, only to receive it honorarily from Oxford many years later) never explained why in 1943, two years before war's end, he stopped drawing for *PM*, whose pages also included James Thurber, Lillian Hellman, I.F. Stone, Erskine Caldwell, and Jimmy Cannon.

But Minear's discovery proves doubly enriching: We are grateful both for what Spiegelman calls a "painless history lesson" rendered in wonderfully stylized drawings, and for the wisdom Dr. Seuss showed in seeing that his greatest talents lay elsewhere—drawing cats in hats, for instance. ♦

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The Canadian prison system has agreed to pay part of the cost of a sex change operation for Synthia Kavanaugh, a transsexual murderer. Ms. Kavanaugh, who was born Richard Chaperon, will be moved to a women's correctional facility. Eleven other prisoners with "gender dysphoria" have also applied for state-funded "gender reassignment" and similar transfer.

—*News item in the* National Post, *Canada's national newspaper, November 22, 1999*

Temporary Man Walking / 3

Chapter 1

The day dawned steely and gray over the transgender block of the Ontario Maximum Security and Self-Esteem Enhancement Facility in the northern corner of the province. Prisoners rose from their cots. Guards checked and rechecked their weapons. For most it would be just another monotonous day, a day like every other. But the atmosphere was different down in the basement wing of the facility, where the most advanced cases were housed, down on Spayed Row.

There Joe (soon to be Jill) Sullivan rose with a start. Joe had been convicted in a string of robberies and murders, and had been sentenced to nearly three months of incarceration under Canada's new Three Strikes and You're Forgiven law. Today, Joe knew, would be his last. All the appeals had been sustained. In a few hours he would become a feminist.

The footsteps were ominous coming down the cellblock. Closer and closer. Finally, a man in a black suit stood silently before him. A guard opened the gate and let him enter the cell. "Good morning, my son," the man said calmly. "It's time to choose your implants." Joe looked over the open briefcase. Big ones and little ones. His hand trembled.

The guards sneered at him. They'd seen it all before. One of them grabbed his television remote control. "I guess you won't be zapping quite as much, will you Joe?" the guard jeered. Joe stared at the floor. "Maybe you find WNBA games interesting. Is that it, Joe?" the other guard snarled. Joe refused to rise to the bait, but made a mental note to call the Empowerment Counselor the province had assigned him. Under Ontario law, guards who violated the strict No Teasing policy could be sentenced to three weeks of Native American crafts workshops.

They brought him his last meal, steak and eggs. One of the outreach officers from Murderers and Rapists Concerned, a grass-roots prison group, came to offer comfort. Then, at last came the doctors. It was time for the final injection. Joe's knees buckled when he saw the estrogen bag. "Be brave," someone whispered. He gathered his strength.

"Can you walk, or should we strap you to a gurney?" he was asked. He motioned that he would walk that final stretch. He turned and went to the back of the cell to perform the traditional last gesture, the putting down of the toilet seat. Then he marched out into the hall.

"Confused Man Walking!" shouted the prisoners up and down the block. They watched grimly as he walked down that Long Pink Mile to the operating room from which no man returned.

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Making Unemployment Insurance Work

Edward P. Lazear is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Jack Steele Parker Professor of Human Resources, Management, and Economics at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business.

The main purpose of unemployment insurance is to cushion temporary, unanticipated spells of unemployment. It is not intended to support those who are chronically out of work or those in industries with relatively high wages and high expected unemployment, like construction.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to eliminate the abuses of unemployment benefits without also eliminating the insurance aspect. Consider construction, where wages are high, in part to make up for seasonal unemployment. Few want to pay construction workers to vacation at the expense of workers and firms in other industries. But eliminating unemployment payments would prevent construction workers from receiving benefits during a recession adversely affecting the construction industry.

To reform the system so that it would provide needed insurance and reward firms and workers who stay off the unemployment rolls, the current subsidy program should become more of a loan program. Under this system, workers would receive benefits during spells of unemployment but would repay a portion of the benefits after returning to work. Firms whose workers stayed off the rolls would pay less; workers who did not draw down benefits would receive more take-home pay. Such a system, which could make most firms and workers better off, works as follows.

Most states now require firms to contribute to an unemployment fund based on some percentage of a worker's wage. Firms whose workers frequently draw from the fund are charged a higher rate. The ceilings built into this "experience rating" system mean that firms that frequently lay off workers pay no more for additional layoffs because they are already at the ceiling rate. At the other end are firms that contribute to the fund forever, even if none of the firm's workers has ever drawn one dollar of benefits, because the firm must contribute at the floor rate.

Rather than basing contributions on a firm's experience, the alternative system bases contributions on each worker's experience. New workers' employers would pay a base rate on their wages, say, 3.4 percent, until a target level was reached in a particular worker's account. Then the employer contribution would fall to half, in this case, 1.7 percent, which would go directly to the worker. Firms that kept workers off the unemployment rolls would benefit, as would workers who avoid using benefits. Firms would pay less and workers would receive more.

Unemployment insurance would still be available to workers who have lost their jobs. When the worker returned to work, the employer would again contribute at the 3.4 percent rate and the worker would contribute at a 2 percent rate until his account reached the target. At that point, employer contributions would again fall to 1.7 percent, which would go directly to the worker.

The new system provides incentives to workers to avoid taking benefits and to firms to retain workers. Benefits would still be available in cases of need, but those workers who try to exploit the system lose because they must repay their benefits and do not receive the increased take-home pay of stable workers.

— Edward P. Lazear

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